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Civil Liberties in Quebec
EDITORIAL

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THE
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Coronation

IF WE MIGHT VENTURE a purely aesthetic criticism (of course it would be disloyal to raise political questions as the solemn moment of the anointing draws nigh), we should say that the publicity directors of the coronation ceremony have badly overdone it. They should have been aware that recent events in the Royal Family have made everybody conscious that the position of the monarchy is largely the result of skilful "build-up", and that a disposition to exclaim "Oh Yeah" is abroad in the land. But they have gone ahead with the old-style ballyhoo as if we were still living in the good old innocent days of 1897. We suspect that, by the time all the broadcasts are over and all the special illustrated supplements are in the garbage can, a very considerable proportion of otherwise loyal subjects will have come to regard the institution of monarchy with feelings varying from boredom to positive distaste. The importance of the monarchy in our modern society is that it is a perfect symbol of the acceptance of class government by a deferential democracy. The success of the English governing classes in the past has been partly due to their sense of restraint, of which there is little evidence in the vulgar display of recent weeks. It has been mainly due to the fact that, while the shows with which they entertained the mob may not have been so feverishly intoxicating as those of Rome and Berlin, they always provided a good ration of panem along with the circenses; but there are rather too many of His Majesty's subjects on relief to make this present show very convincing.

Vote Liberal and Get Reaction

THE PRIMARY CHARGE to be made against the King government during its two years of office is against its culpable inaction. But if Liberal democracy is to survive in our modern world it will only be as the result of a vigorous lead given by a government which professes to be liberal and democratic. There is such a government in the United States which is giving such a lead. Measured by the standards of the Roosevelt administration our Canadian Liberal government presents a sorry picture. The two governments have the same sort of problems confronting them. Both have run into the obstacle of judicial review; both are stopped by the courts from legislative regulation of our economy. Mr. King folds his arms and does nothing. President Roosevelt proceeds to attack the undue power of the Supreme Court, and the mere threat of action is followed by the Court's liberal decision on the Wagner Act. Both governments are faced by widespread destitution and unemployment. The Roosevelt administration gets a Social Security Act on the statute books, organizes the C.C.C. camps for young men, sets in process the rehabilitation of a whole distressed area in the T.V.A., gives creative jobs to artists and playwrights, and infuses throughout the whole community a new spirit of confidence in the ability of a democratic government to deal vigorously and imaginatively with the problems of a democratic society. The King government makes some gestures about investigation, and confines itself to cutting down relief appropriations. Its inaction, however, passes over into reaction as time goes on. It defends increases in defence expenditures by the more-than-hint that these are meant to deal with "subversive forces", i.e., with those elements in the community who come under the disapproval of the Catholic hierarchy. It organizes a reserve for the R.C.M.P. And when Mr. Hepburn, in Ontario, decides to lend the forces of government to General Motors, the federal authorities send the Mounties to be used against strikers in Oshawa who have shown not the slightest signs of disorder.

Oshawa

THE STRIKE AT OSHAWA is in a state of deadlock as we write. No contrast could be more marked than that between the exemplary restraint of the strikers and the raving hysteria with which their perfectly legal strike has been greeted by the

Prime Minister of Ontario and by his alter ego of the Globe and Mail. Mr. Hepburn denounces "foreign agitators" among the men who have formed a branch of the automobile workers' union and refuses to negotiate with the union until it gets rid of these foreigners, in complete disregard of the fact that there are more foreigners among the high executives of General Motors at Oshawa than have yet come into Canada as organizers for the C.I.O. General Motors of Canada itself is completely owned by the parent General Motors Corporation of the United States. The American corporation does not even publish financial statements of its Canadian operations. Mr. Hepburn's threat of force and his vague denunciations of "foreign agitators" among our lumber camps, pulp mills and mines, in fact his whole conduct, can have no other purpose than to stir up a general panic. The workers have a perfect right to choose whomsoever they will to represent and speak for them in their dealings with the management and with the government. We are willing to believe that the Ottawa government has been somewhat reluctant in its support of Mr. Hepburn. But between them the two "Liberal" governments are giving Canadian workers an object lesson in the necessity of getting political power to bolster up trade union action. As for public opinion, unless we are badly mistaken, it will turn out in Ontario, as in Michigan and in the United States generally, that the common people have developed a remarkable immunity to the hysteria which the newspapers are trying to foment, that there is a general acceptance of the idea of collective bargaining, and a willingness to see it enforced by sit-downs, ordinary strikes, government intervention, or by all together.

Labor, Organized and Unorganized

THE SMASHING VICTORY of the railway unions probably explains much of the frenzy of the capitalist opposition to the C.I.O. The moral for unorganized labour is too obvious: Go thou and do likewise. And is organization necessary? Ask the Montreal longshoremen. The International Longshoremen's Association has just been trying to get the Shipping Federation to allow a ballot to be taken along the waterfront to see whether the men prefer the I.L.A. or what is called "The National Independent Union of Longshoremen". The Shipping Federation, in which the C.P.R. is said to be a dominant influence, refuses, and the provincial Minister of Labour assures the "National" Union of his support. Meanwhile, the police director and the Crown prosecutor of Montreal, taking their cue from more eminent persons, denounce the sit-down, and the Catholic Textile Union hastens to try to get a collective labour agreement between itself and the companies which will fix wages by law and so forestall any attempt of the C.I.O. to organize the wretchedly underpaid workers in this leading, heavily protected and highly profitable industry.

Taking the Profits

THE DOMINION GOVERNMENT has at last promised legislation to control armament profits, and has already put through an Act giving it power to regulate the export, and apparently even to some extent, the manufacture, of materials of war. On the face of it, this is a triumph for the campaign to "Take the Profits Out of War". But a front page article in the Financial Post of April 10 makes it clear that it would be unsafe to take either the promise or the new Act at their face value. "From authoritative government sources assurance is given" that the government will exercise control over the sale of munitions "only when issues of national or imperial policy are raised by the nations to which armaments are being shipped". As for control of profits, "No restriction whatever is intended of profits made by Canadian firms from the sale of munitions or armaments to foreign countries" and "the policy will be enforced only if and when Canada itself is at war". "A member of the ministry" is quoted as saying: "The object which the government has in view is not to prevent Canadian industry from making money out of other nations' wars. That would be wholly unsound. To limit profits on foreign munition orders would simply be to help to make armaments cheap for nations that are prepared to break the peace of the world. . . . The higher the prices that Canadian firms can secure for war supplies, the better, even if it does mean excessive profits for them . . . It is solely the limitation of profits out of a Canadian war that the government will concern itself with". As the method of control being considered is an excess profits tax, it is hard to see how its application to "other nations' wars" would make armaments cheap for them. In any case, why should not the government try another method of control which would not cheapen the product: strict regulation of wages and working conditions in arms factories?

Dominion Control of Industry

ANY SUGGESTION of controlling wages and working conditions will, of course, at once meet the objection that it is beyond the powers of the Dominion. In this connection, a recent speech by the Hon. C. H. Cahan to the Montreal Canadian Club is illuminating. After pointing out that the successive decisions of the Privy Council had

resulted in giving Canada a constitution substantially different from what the Fathers of Confederation intended (Mr. Cahan has since been even more emphatic on this subject, in his speech in the House of Commons on April 5, the most notable speech of the whole session), he said: "There is in the British North America Act a special provision for exceptional legislative treatment of industry . . . It is expressly provided in section 92, head 10, clause (c) that the Dominion Parliament has legislative jurisdiction over — 'Such works as, though wholly situate within the province, are before or after their execution declared by the Parliament of Canada to be for the general advantage of Canada'. And I suggest that if the Parliament of Canada . . . should deem it necessary or advisable . . . it can lawfully acquire industrial works, wherever situate in Canada, are deemed to be works for the general advantage of Canada". In the same speech, Mr. Cahan advocated reviving the use of the Dominion's power of disallowing provincial legislation "for the preservation and maintenance of national interests". If the civil liberties of British subjects are, as they would seem to be, a "national interest", this suggestion has an obvious bearing on the question of disallowing Mr. Duplessis' Padlock Act.

Relief and Municipalities

THE OTTAWA JOURNAL, in an editorial of March 25, calls attention to an aspect of the government's proposed reductions in relief payments which is likely to become more, rather than less, serious. For the first two months of the year, total relief expenditures in Ottawa were down $85,541 from the previous year. But Dominion and provincial contributions were down $109,177. The Dominion and the province had reduced their costs at the rate of $650,000 a year, while the city found its costs increased by $140,000 a year. With fewer people on relief, lower costs per person, lower administrative expenses, the Ottawa taxpayer, nevertheless, was called upon to assume a heavier burden. This experience is almost certainly not peculiar to Ottawa. The hapless fate of New Brunswick cities, deprived of all assistance from the Dominion and the province, is well known. It is high time for public authorities to recognize that, as the Financial Post puts it, "Social welfare cannot be adequately financed through the sources of revenue available to the municipalities, but must be financed on at least a province-wide basis. . . . Gradually we must move entirely away from the taxation of real estate for social purposes." In an early pioneer community, where a person's total wealth consisted largely of real estate, taxation based on real estate was reasonably equitable. Nowadays, two persons may have approximately the same amount of real estate, and yet one of them may be ten, fifteen or twenty times as rich as the other. Taxation of real property has accordingly become one of the most outrageously inequitable forms of taxation; and the more functions the municipality is called upon to perform, the greater the injustices become. This is a problem that should engage the attention of the Royal Commission on Dominion and provincial financial powers and responsibilities. Meanwhile it should be impressed firmly on the mind of the Minister of Labour.

C. B. C.

THIS IS THE SEASON of the year when law-abiding citizens renew their radio licenses. The authorities have certainly become more efficient during the past year in seeing that most of us stay law-abiding in this matter. But the letter from our Chinese correspondent, which we print in another column, draws attention to the fact that the new regime in Canadian broadcasting is failing to produce results in the one field where results count, in programs. Unless it can provide programs on the air which are sufficiently attractive to keep us from tuning in on the American chains, the national control of radio is going to be a failure. So far, we are being asked to take on faith the enterprise and imagination which the new management were supposed to bring into the radio field. We indulge in this criticism in no spirit of unfriendliness towards Major Gladstone Murray (but did he really mean it when he asked the papers to stop calling him Major?). Some of the implied criticisms in the letter of our Chinese correspondent are not completely fair. But if Mr. Murray wants to hold the support of the public, a support which he may need some day against attacks by the private interests, his staff must give us programs that a large section of the radio owning public will enjoy. It is highly unlikely that Canada can beat the American chains in programs of the popular mass-appeal variety. Would it be too impossibly high-brow, therefore, to suggest that our program-makers might build up some support in hitherto neglected quarters by occasionally giving us something after eight o'clock in the evening that frankly wouldn't attempt to rival Rudy Vallee?

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Civil Liberties in Quebec

MR. DUPLESSIS' "Padlock Act", passed just as our last issue went to press, is an incredible document, probably without parallel in the world outside Italy and Germany. Rushed through the legislature at breakneck speed and with the minimum of warning to the public, the Act makes it "illegal for any person who possesses or occupies a house within the province to use it or allow any person to make use of it to propagate Communism or Bolshevism by any means whatsoever"; confers on the Attorney-General power to "order the closing of the house against its use for any purpose whatsoever for a period of not more than one year", if he has what he thinks "satisfactory proof" that the house has been used for "Communistic or Bolshevistic" propaganda; makes it unlawful, under penalty of imprisonment (three to twelve months) "to print, to publish . . . or to distribute in the province any newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, circular, document or writing whatsoever propagating or tending to propagate Communism or Bolshevism"; and empowers any constable, on the authorization of the Attorney-General or his representative, to seize and confiscate such literature, whereupon the Attorney-General may order it to be destroyed.

It will be noted that the Attorney-General can close a house (defined as "any building, shelter, penthouse, shed, or other construction, under whatever name known or designated, attached to the ground or portable, erected or placed above or below ground, permanently or temporarily") or order the seizure and destruction of literature at his own sweet will. He does not have to prove anything before a court. It is only after a house has been padlocked that the unfortunate owner may petition a judge of the Superior Court to have the order revised or cancelled; and the burden of proof is on the owner. If he can show that he did not know that the house was being used for "Communistic or Bolshevistic" propaganda, or show that it was not in fact so used during the twelve months preceding the padlock order, the judge may suspend the order on the owner's furnishing security that the building will not again be used for such purposes. If the owner can prove that the place was not used for such purposes during the preceding year the judge may cancel the order. There is no appeal.

The sweeping and arbitrary powers granted to the Attorney-General, the heavy penalties, the placing of the burden of proof on the accused, the denial of the right of appeal, these in themselves are serious enough threats to the civil liberties of all citizens. But what is far more sinister and menacing is that the Act nowhere defines "Communism" or "Bolshevism", and that this omission is deliberate. When the premier, who is also the attorney-general, was asked to insert a definition he replied that it was unnecessary: "Communism can be felt. . . We shall understand by Communism what everyone understands by Communism . . . Any definition would prevent the application of the law." This is revealing. Still more so are the statements of various members of the Upper House, presumably "the sober second thought" of the province. Sir Thomas Chapais, government leader, followed the premier's example in refusing to insert a definition. "He did not believe in restricting such an evil within a narrow compass." (Whether this is Sir Thomas' own phrase or the reporter's is not clear.) "Communism was a thousand-faced movement, different in Russia from what it was in Spain or Mexico. It was a subtle error, a system which aimed to sap the foundations of society wherever it was preached. It is a doctrine by which private property would be abolished. This is nothing we can put in a bill."

Hon. Jacob Nicol believed it "well to have a definition of Communism, and included therein as Communists could be classed those who daily vilify public men." He favored eliminating Communism and Socialism. Hon. John Hall Kelly "said there might be some difficulty in defining Communism, but not of an insurmountable nature. If a definition could not be found he was ready to pass the bill as it was now. He was ready to have a definition which stated the Communism meant those actions which sap the foundations of the things dear to the province. Perhaps the clergy of the various churches could help with a definition. Personally, he did not know the difference between Communism and Bolshevism, and perhaps a judge on the bench might prove to know as little."

In plain words, the Act gives the Attorney-General practically a free hand to suppress any opinions he may happen to dislike. Private conversations in private homes might be used as ground for turning people on to the street. So might the possession of any literature of which the Attorney-General disapproved. If the section dealing with papers and pamphlets were strictly enforced, it would prevent the circulation of the Bible ("And all that believed were together, and had all things common") or the early Christian Fathers, the writings of Sir Thomas More (recently canonized by the Roman Catholic Church) or Charles Kingsley.

Indeed, the possibilities are almost limitless. The Attorney-General has given us one display of his psychic powers to "feel" Communism by denouncing as a Communist Alderman Schubert of Montreal, who has again and again opposed the Communists and been opposed by them, and who holds a responsible position under the Collective Labor Agreements Act. This is a very fair sample of the spirit in which the Act is likely to be applied.

So far there has been no overt action under the law. There may not be much in the future. To a large extent it will be unnecessary. The mere threat of padlocking held over the heads of hall owners, or for that matter owners of ordinary houses or apartments, or the proprietors of newsstands, will often be enough to enable the Attorney-General to suppress criticism or opposition of any kind without anyone but the victims knowing anything about it.

What the Attorney-General may do with his new powers we can perhaps surmise from an incident which took place two or three days before the padlock bill was brought down. At two o'clock in the morning provincial police officers suddenly swooped down on the offices of the Montreal Unemployment Relief Commission, and for some time kept out the commissioners and their staff. The only authority they produced for this action was a telegram from the provincial auditor, acting on the instructions of the provincial government. They had no warrant at all. In other words, the whole proceeding was completely and palpably illegal. Two of the commissioners are General Panet, a high official of the C.P.R., and Colonel Perry, of the Sun Life Assurance Company. If these things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? If, without any legal power, the provincial government is ready to treat important officers of two of the largest corporations in the country this way, what will it do to ordinary citizens now that it has full powers conferred on it by the legislature?

It may be added that the new Act shows a singular lack of confidence in Quebec juries. The Attorney-General can, whenever he pleases, proceed against "subversive elements" under the sedition section of the Criminal Code. But he evidently prefers not to risk it.

Competent lawyers say that the Act is almost certainly invalid, beyond the powers of the province, a clear attempt to invade the Dominion's field of criminal law. If and when the Attorney-General publicly applies the law it will be, no doubt, fought through the courts, right up to the Privy Council if necessary. Meanwhile, are there no other means of protecting the liberties of Quebec citizens? Yes. Two. In the first place, the Dominion Cabinet, under the Supreme Court Act (R.S.C. 1927, chapter 35, section 55) can refer any Dominion or provincial legislation to the Supreme Court for a test of its validity. Mr. Woodsworth has asked for this and the Minister of Justice has replied that the suggestion "will receive the most serious consideration."

In the second place, there is the Dominion's power to disallow, within one year of its passing, any Act of a provincial legislature. This power has been used about one hundred times. Mr. Lapointe now says, however, (Hansard, March 30, 1937, p. 2473), that "For many years the power of disallowance has not been resorted to by the government of Canada . . . I do not think that in a federation such as this the power of disallowance could be exercised by the central government." This is interesting, especially as coming from Mr. Lapointe. In the years 1922-1924, the Cabinet of which he was a member disallowed four provincial Acts: three in Nova Scotia and one in Alberta. What is more, the last provincial Act to be disallowed, the Alberta Mineral Tax Act, 1924, was disallowed on the advice of none other than the Honorable Ernest Lapointe! (P.C. 701 or 702 — the number is differently given in different state documents — dated April 29, 1924). At that date, the Minister of Justice had evidently not discovered the scruples which now stay his hand. In fact, there is no legal or constitutional reason against disallowance; on the contrary, there is ample precedent for such action. Plenty of provincial Acts have been disallowed on the grounds that they were "beyond the powers of the province", "contrary to Dominion policy" (expressed in this case in the repeal of section 98 of the Criminal Code), and "contrary to reason, justice and natural equity". The Dominion Cabinet can disallow if it wants to. Some timid radicals, to be sure, turn pale at the mere suggestion, fearing that the power might be used to frustrate the intensions of other provincial legislatures bent on doing things which would be altogether praiseworthy. This is quite possible. Any power given to any authority may be used for purposes we disapprove as well as for those we approve. But in the struggle to preserve civil liberties we must make use of every weapon the law allows us. In the United States, the "due process" clause has been shamelessly prostituted for the purposes of repression; but no American liberal would think that sufficient ground for declining to make use of it to protect civil liberties. In the absence, in Canada, of any constitutional guarantees of the rights of the citizen such as are contained in the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution (something which should be attended to in any revision of the B.N.A. Act), it is more than ever necessary to avail ourselves of what meagre possibilities of protection the existing Constitution provides.

A Socialist View of the League

by H. N. BRAILSFORD

DURING THE recent meeting of Socialists from many countries in London a wide difference of opinion disclosed itself between the English standpoint and that of the Continental Left. It is not that any difference of doctrine divides us. We differ solely in our approach to the problems of European policy created by Germany's re-armament and the weakness of the League.

To our Austrian and French comrades we English appeared curiously tolerant, as though we barely realized the nature of the German menace. Hitler, by his remilitarization of the Rhineland, had delivered a challenge, as some would say, to the League, as others would put it, to all that is left of democracy in Europe. If he achieved his end, would he not become the recognized leader of property and reaction in the European class struggle? Hesitating groups and governments would rally to this daring, resolute power, and when next it repeated its tactic of the fait accompli, whether against Austria, or Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union, it would have behind it new allies and would face a demoralized and impotent League. Fascism might submerge all Europe from the Atlantic coasts to the Russian border. The English seemed to have no perception of the meaning of this trial of strength, but went on talking about the iniquities of Versailles.

We and our European Socialist comrades live in the same world; we are contemporaries, and yet we have different historical backgrounds. Nothing has happened in this tranquil island to break the continuity of our memories. We see the events of the day as the inevitable sequel to 1918. The German nation is flinging off the fetters of Versailles, and though we may dislike and distrust its leader, and disapprove his methods, the result is not altogether unwelcome. We have had an uneasy conscience over all that Lloyd George and Clemenceau did, and it would please us to see the entire war settlement revised. That is the prevailing English view, common to all parties, though a minority, to which Mr. Churchill belongs, dissents. The horror of war which the whole population feels in varying degrees makes us peculiarly sensitive when events recall the years that led up to 1914. When the Franco-British military staffs converse in London, we recollect the stages by which Sir Edward Grey led us into the world war. Are we then moving blindly towards a repetition of that massacre, with the same enemy, the same allies, and once more the same crazy settlement? So we recoil, we try to be just and impartial, we examine the enemy's case.

All this from the continental standpoint is barely intelligible. From the mid-European angle the world began anew in 1933. The new fact of the rise of Fascism blotted out past history. Versailles has about as much reality as Tutenkhamen's tomb. The only tactic worth considering is one which will save democracy and inflict on this menace to civilization an overwhelming defeat. While some say "democracy" others mean, frankly, the Soviet Union. The two are not identical but assuredly they have a common enemy. We see it from our island much diminished by distance. Our Sir Oswald Mosley is as yet only a ridiculous figure and we do not find him alarming. Our governing class has a much subtler technique. It does not beat up its opponents, it gives them knighthoods. It does not put labor leaders in concentration camps, it tames them in the House of Commons.

The difference between the points of view comes to a climax when we face the League of Nations. The more orthodox elements of the Labour Party are still wholly uncritical towards this institution, and are content to go on repeating what President Wilson and Lord Cecil taught them. If it manifestly fails, they blame Sir John Simon, Sir Samuel Hoare or Mr. Baldwin. They feel no doubt that if a Labour minister had sat in Downing Street from 1931 onwards the League would have marched from triumph to triumph. It has hardly begun to dawn on them that its failure is latent in the whole structure of capitalist society itself. If they had begun to feel any doubts, the arrival of the Soviet Union at Geneva removed them.

Against this official attitude the Left of the Socialist movement in England has been struggling for a considerable time. It suffered a heavy defeat at the last conference of the party, but its views continue to spread among the rank and file, though it is rather events, than any deliberate propaganda, that assist them. I need not here set out at length our theoretical criticisms of the League. An institution which accepts as it stands the whole capitalist-imperialist structure of the world cannot ever begin to remove the economic causes of war. Collective security may be a sound ideal, but what does the League, collectively, secure? Things as they are: the existing balance of power, the existing distribution of economic opportunity. Nor is it easy to see how, based on national sovereignty, and bound by its rule of unanimity, it can ever become

the organ of a new order of society, or even serve as an instrument of revision and reform.

This and much more every thoughtful Socialist ought to have seen from the first. There is, however, a possible answer from the standpoint of practical politics. This League may be little more than an alliance of the Versailles Victors, but may it not serve our ends, if it keeps peace in Europe, holds Hitler in check, and preserves the Soviet Union from attack until it grows even stronger than it is today?

Our first answer to this perfectly intelligible position is that it involves the deception of the working masses, and the postponement of any attempt to educate them. Their ears are open day after day to the Liberal-capitalist propaganda of the press, the wireless and the churches, which have thrown round the League a halo of almost religious sanctity. If we begin by saying "Rally to the League. Prepare to obey it. Be ready to march at its command. It is our best hope of peace", it is quite impossible to proceed to a Marxist analysis of the causes of war. A lecturer of great subtlety addressing a quick-witted audience might possibly perform this feat. But our masses think in black and white. Either you believe in this League or you don't. If you do, then you belong to the same regiment as Mr. Baldwin, the Archbishops and Lord Cecil. The result of this attitude was evident enough at the last general election. Since the Labor Party agreed with the government about the League what was the use of asking the average simple man to vote against Mr. Baldwin?

The case, however, is much graver than this. The League — meaning an alliance of Great Britain, France, Italy and Russia — may stave off war for some years, but equally, it may fail. No sane man who watches it with his eyes open can feel confident. We must, then, examine the other alternative — a war against Germany sanctioned by the League.

We have a bitter experience behind us. Seen from the angle of London, the war that ended in the Versailles settlement was nothing but a colossal, predatory, imperialist adventure, fought to destroy a formidable rival, to capture his trade, to appropriate his colonies, and drive his navy from the seas. None-the-less, it was possible for Mr. Asquith, by talking eloquently about the sanctity of international law, to mobilize our Labour party, to deceive our working class, and to keep it loyal to a bourgeois patriotism through four years of massacre. It had on the settlement no influence whatever, and indeed, several years passed before the masses of our workers began to criticize it.

If we support Geneva today this feat can be repeated with vastly greater ease. We know our governing class well enough to feel sure that it would not undertake such an effort for the single end of "defending democracy". Its objective would be power, and the economic gains that flow from power. Doubtless Hitler would fall, but will anyone who lived through 1919 venture to predict that a Socialist state could come into existence in Germany or Austria? The probability is that Germany would be dismembered and placed under governments that would assure the capitalist order. If the Russians made any serious attempt to promote a workers' revolution, the war which began with an attack on Hitler would end in an allied march on Moscow.

It may be said that Socialists could use the war for revolutionary ends. That is possible in the event of defeat, but not after victory. Certainly it would not be possible, if in the meanwhile we allow the workers to believe that peace can be won by collaborating at Geneva with capitalist and even with Fascist governments.

Our effort is, on the contrary, to foster the spirit of independence in our workers, first of all, towards any British capitalist government, and secondly towards any group of capitalist governments, whether it calls itself frankly an alliance or misuses the name of League of Nations. Our attitude towards any war must be decided not by automatic reference to Geneva but by the judgment of the working class itself. It may be that the war will come in conditions that render mass-resistance impossible. None-the-less we preach that duty, and endeavor to combat the simpler-minded patriotism of our workers, who are only too ready to make common cause with the governing class in every issue of war and peace. In the League we see the most subtle and the most powerful instrument of class collaboration yet devised.

This is not, needless to say, a pacifist attitude. If we had our own Socialist government in London we should frankly advocate a defensive alliance with the Soviet Union and with France.

This is, the reader may object, a somewhat negative attitude. That is true. Europe, it seems to us, inherits a past so complex and so evil that within the framework of the present order no good, or even tolerable solution, is possible. That is why we seek to keep our class, bound by no loyalties to Geneva, free to face a revolutionary future.

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CORONATION ODE

God save our gracious King! Long may he guard
Our loyal land from harm, with the consent
Of Parliament
—That must be definitely understood;
And if he finds it hard
To be invariably (in this sense) good,
May he in time remember
Certain developments of last December
And keep obediently locked and barred
Th' unruly member.
Oh may he not suggest
Or even hint,
At least not when it might get into print,
That all in England is not for the best;
That 'twixt Cape Wrath and Dover
There are some men who do not live in clover.

May he defend our laws; that is to say,
Defend the laws our masters think will pay,
But dutifully wink
If so they do not think;
And always scrupulously shun
To say that something "must" or "will" be done.
"Must" is no word for princes; may he know it.
And if he feel resentment, be very very careful
not to show it.

In short, may he not broach
A single subject, saving by command.
And with a ruthless hand
May his fair court be shorn
Of all at whom the Nation's Church in scorn
Can point the foul reproach
Of "international". May he not deplore
War;
But if, alas, it come, to face his task
May he be served the most perfected mask.

God save our gracious Queen; long may she stand,
A mighty tower by an unshaken throne;
And may the bland
Lords of the Press,
And even Beverly Baxter, all profess
In decorous trumpet-tone
That limited loyalty from which there springs
Our guarded passion for our temperate kings.

Long live their Majesties! Long may they reign
(Long as they watch their step
And keep their rep-
utation
As representatives of a Moral Nation)
Upheld and fostered by the mild applause
Of pure Archbishops breathing household laws.

JOHN SMALACOMBE.

Eastview and the Public Good

CLARIS EDWIN SILCOX

AS ONE LEAVES OTTAWA by motor for Montreal, following the south shore of the Ottawa River, he no sooner passes the city limits of the national capital than he finds himself in Eastview. This town, in the census of 1931, had a population of 6,686, of whom 4,747 were of French racial origin and 5,485 were Roman Catholics. The people are relatively poor, and local taxation in 1935 had provided only $5,000 of the $130,000 required for municipal unemployment relief. The public school had defaulted interest payments on its bonds; while the separate school, which most of the children, so numerous in Eastview, attend, had received in one year provincial grants as large as the total amount derived from local taxation. The poverty of Eastview, therefore, was of some importance to the people of the province of Ontario and the Dominion of Canada.

The town, so obviously poor, has little claim to fame except in two respects. In the first place, in the cemetery adjoining the parish church, is an imposing sarcophagus supported by nine female figures representing the Canadian provinces, and bearing the simple inscription "LAURIER". Eastview, like Cataraqui, has the honour of being the last resting-place of one of the two outstanding Canadian statesmen of the past. But in the future, Eastview will also go down to fame as the scene of a famous trial involving birth control, which commenced on October 21, 1936, and continued at intervals until March 17, 1937. The case occupied twenty full days in all. A verbatim record of the proceedings extended beyond 750,000 words, while the argument contained another 400,000 words. The final decision, acquitting the defendant, was given by the magistrate in a written statement of seventeen legal folio pages. It thus probably established a record for cases heard in a magistrate's court in Canada.

The magistrate's decision establishes a notable precedent in Canadian criminal jurisprudence. For the defendant in the case was acquitted of violating section 207 of the Criminal Code of Canada, and more specifically of advertising means of contraception, after her counsel had successfully urged at great length that she was serving the "public good", provided for in subsection 4 of the particular section in question which reads:

> "No one shall be convicted of the offence in the section mentioned if he proves that the public good was served by the acts alleged to have been done, and that there was no excess in the acts alleged beyond what the public good required".

This was the first time that the defence of the public good had been argued in a British court of justice in a case involving the dissemination of birth control information, the other notable cases in the United Kingdom and in Australia turning on the question of obscenity. The magistrate's decision supported the defence, affirming that it had proved that the public good had been served and that any possible "excess in one or two cases was so small compared to the good in other cases as to amount to no excess at all". Birth control thus gains an unusual legal footing in Canada, although those who care to disseminate such information must still be prepared to prove, if haled to court, that their activities are designed to further the public good.

The defendant, Dorothy Palmer, who had had some hospital training in England and was employed by the Parents' Information Bureau of Kitchener, was not called to the stand during the whole trial. Those engaged in defending her seemed at times to all but forget her presence, since to them she was but a symbol of a great cause which was being accused. The prolonged strain of the more than six months during which she did not know whether she would have to go to the penitentiary for the term of two years prescribed by the law or not, told heavily on her at times. But she was surrounded by a corps of lawyers, social service workers, doctors, psychiatrists, labor leaders, economists, sociologists, clergymen and moral theologians who made her case their own, and gave freely and largely of their time and expert resources, in order that she might be acquitted and the question of the "public good" be frankly and fearlessly faced — even on the south shore of the Ottawa River.

In the first few days of the trial, the room was well occupied by a large number of Eastview women brought forward by the Crown to testify against Miss Palmer, to wit, that they had been visited by her and encouraged to sign an application card asking that contraceptive devices be sent to them; that following this, they had received, without incurring any expense on their part, a box of such materials. These boxes had afterwards, according to the testimony, been collected by Officer Martel, representing the Majesty of the Law, and on the original initiative of parties undescribed to the Court, and were duly submitted as corroborative evidence. The magistrate's table was soon littered with such boxes. Some of the boxes had been

handed over just as they had been received through the mails; in others some articles were suspiciously missing; in the case of at least one witness, no box at all was presented to corroborate the evidence. It seemed for a time as if the court might become a Birth Control Clinic itself, if not indeed a veritable Birth Control Museum. In the course of the discussion, even the experts picked up new and unexpected information!

The defence also contributed to the museum. It presented in evidence a large collection of contraceptive materials, purchased by two young men from drug-stores and gas-stations in Ottawa and Eastview. They testified that they had no difficulty in securing what they demanded, the sales-clerks never inquiring whether they were married or unmarried, much less discussing with them at length the moral, physical, economic, sociological, philosophical and theological aspects of the use of such materials. The defence further submitted several books published with ecclesiastical approbation and circulated by the Catholic Truth Society! As the experts continued their evidence, they drew forth from trunks which they brought with them dictionaries, encyclopaedias, prayer-books, various versions of the Bible, commentaries, ecclesiastical pronouncements, works on sociology, medicine, law, psychiatry, economics, vital statistics, population problems, and even huge tomes on Catholic Moral Theology and several volumes containing the treatises of St. Augustine in Latin. Volumes in French, German and other languages had also been assembled. The bibliography of books and pamphlets consulted by the defence covered, in fact, thirty pages of closely-typed titles. Eastview had not only secured for the time being a Birth Control Clinic; it had also established a remarkable circulating library!

As the case proceeded the attendance of the local women dwindled. Rumour has it that they had been advised not to attend. This may be so, but it was evident that most of them, in the course of their testimony, indicated considerable sympathy with the defendant, and nearly all of them answered unequivocally, and in the negative, to the routine question put to them by the defence "when you signed this application, did you think that you were doing anything morally wrong? Three Roman Catholic priests were in regular attendance under instructions from their superiors, one of them — it is understood — being specially delegated by His Eminence, Cardinal Villeneuve. One of them was being prepared to go into the box; but the defence was not granted the opportunity of questioning him, as the prosecution decided to place the brunt of their case on the theological side on the shoulders of an elderly Anglo-Catholic rector in Ottawa who did not prove to be particularly conversant with the questions involved. Messenger boys came and went, carrying reports which found their ways into all the newspapers across Canada. Canadians everywhere received a great deal of birth control information without money and without price. Even the Crown prosecutor admitted that he would feel competent, when he had finished the case, to write an examination in sociology!

There were many humourous incidents, some of which hardly bear repetition, for the frankness with which a case of this character must be handled is hardly conductive to the development of holy reticence. One of the women witnesses testified that Miss Palmer had visited her and offered her information concerning contraceptives. "What did you tell her?" asked the Crown. "I told her," replied the witness, "that she came too late". The Anglo-Catholic clergyman called by the Crown averred that he disapproved of birth control because the marriage service in the book of Common Prayer expressed a hope that such marriages would be fertile, and why should the church pray that the couple would be blessed with children and then approve steps which might prevent such children from being born? His attention was then directed to the fact that he had omitted to submit in evidence one of the collects in the marriage service which besought the blessing of Almighty God to rest upon the couple even as it had rested upon Abraham and Sarah. Yes, he admitted, but that collect had nothing to do with birth control. Well, asked the defence counsel, if the Church of England were really concerned about fertility, could they not have suggested a better exemplar than Sarah? Of course, said the priest, Sarah did not have many children. I should say not, retored the counsel, she did not have any child at all until she was ninety-one years of age and then it took a miracle! There was also a deep undertone of amusement when the defence counsel began his analysis of certain references, in the papal encyclical "Connubii Casti", to the works of St. Augustine, and sought to prove that His Holiness had permitted a misrepresentation of the teaching of St. Augustine. It was indeed a rare privilege to use the facilities of a court of justice to question the exegetical integrity of His Holiness, and his advisers would be well advised to be more careful henceforth how they quote from "apostolic" and patristic authorities.

Despite the occasional humour, there was a sense of strain among the corps of advisers gathered together by the defence. If one "excess" could be proved, the defendant might have to go to Kingston for two years. Each ear was alert to catch anything which might possibly be construed as an excess, and the experts for the defence kept sending up slips of papers to the defence counsel suggesting

all kinds of difficult questions which helped to make life increasingly intolerable for the Crown's witnesses. Perhaps the most trying moment for the defence was when one of the Crown's medical witnesses testified that the "glass" nozzle in one of the appliances might be broken in the human body and create obvious difficulties. The experts had no answer for that and the counsel was on the point of letting the evidence go unchallenged, when up came a slip of paper from the fairy godfather of the Parents' Information Bureau, reminding the counsel that the nozzle was made of celluloid, not glass. Heavy hearts grew lighter. It was hardly appropriate for the Crown to argue that celluloid was, nevertheless, inflammable!

There was also a profound consciousness that all concerned were dealing with the most far-reaching problems of human life — sex, the family, love and marriage, health and disease, the population of Canada, morality, economic problems, social justice, the rights of women "qua" women, intercultural friction, interreligious problems, the limitations of law in creating a sound morality, the proper relations between church and state, even question of war and peace. For there is no fundamental human problem which is not related to, or involved in, any fair consideration of the issues raised by the Birth Control movement.

There was, for instance, the basic problem of morality. Can we depend upon legal coercion or the withholding of scientific information to make people good? Is not real morality a matter of freedom of choice, and can people make moral choices if information necessary to their choices is deliberately withheld from them? Over and over again, one of the defence witnesses insisted that people cannot be made moral by law; law could only make it easier to be good or more difficult to be bad, but real morality grew out of inner constraints which the law could neither create nor destroy.

There was the right of women to determine for themselves when they were prepared to invite a new life into the world. Upon women is the real burden of child-bearing laid — to them the issue may be one of life or death, and they, not their husbands, should have the last word as to the risk they might undertake. All women are entitled to this information, insisted the witnesses; what they do with it is their own business and determines whether they are truly moral or not.

There was the question whether birth control might adversely affect the growth of the Canadian population, already so small, and what was an optimum population for this sparsely-settled, half-continent of ours. Here the defence witnesses averred that while birth control might restrict or increase the population it was but one element in the situation. The question of restriction or increase was primarily contingent upon the nature of the economic system which might prevail in Canada. Under the present economic system, birth control was inevitable; under any economic system it would be desirable.

There was the question, neurological and psychiatric, whether sex served the ends of physical and mental health, quite apart from any procreative purposes, and much discussion of "emotional cycles", and how the use of contraceptives might relieve a certain strain and anxiety due to the fear of pregnancy which often undermined the health of the wife and so upset her nervously that the happiness of the home might be destroyed.

There was the problem posed in the fertility of French-Canadians. Was not the activity of the Parents' Information Bureau really an effort to lessen the extreme fertility of the French, the race of the Dionnes, the race which had early affirmed that although the British had captured Canada, theirs would be "la revanche de nos berceaux". This gave the defence an opportunity to advance the claim that high fertility resulted in high infant mortality, low educational standards, a cheap labour market and a lowered standard of living.

The interreligious question ever intruded. Was it for the public good for Miss Palmer to go to persons whom she knew to be Roman Catholics and advise them to make use of means which their church had banned? Was it for the "public good" to incite people to "sin"? To this, the defence argued that no religious group can expect the law to enforce the "cordon sanitaire" which it might attempt to throw around its own faithful; that while any scurrilous attacks on the faith of those visited would be lamentable, nearly all the Roman Catholic women who had testified for the Crown had affirmed that they did not believe that they were doing anything morally wrong when they signed the application cards; that birth controllers believed in their movement with the fervour of the early apostles who visited Mediterranean centres with the heresy of Christianity and disrupted many Jewish synagogues, and that while some moral confusion might exist at first, it would only prove the prelude to a greater moral integrity.

There were many distinctly medical questions, although the defence argued strenuously that medicine in itself had no right to determine what were essentially sociological, economic and moral problems; that medicine could properly only be asked to express an opinion on the relative safety or harmlessness of the various contraceptive measures proposed.

There was the problem of social justice, the necessity of providing, through taxation, for the

care of families of the proletariat. The defence insisted that the socially irresponsible and those who did not have "the grace of continence" should be provided with the means whereby they might be prevented from inflicting more than their quota on the already over-taxed shoulders of the more responsible and the more discreet. It made clear that birth control is fundamental to sound economic and social reform; that the word "proletariat" was given by Servius Tullius in ancient Rome to that section of Roman society which served the state by "proles" and nothing else; that it was futile to talk about equality when certain strains, economically, if not mentally and physically inferior, were breeding with utter irresponsibility, creating new burdens for the other classes; that birth control would render unnecessary many of the burdens of the "social services" so-called, which were too often concerned with the amelioration of misfortune instead of prevention of poverty.

Hard things were said, but without bitterness or scorn, and the court-room was redolent of kindliness and good-will. During various recesses, the priests and the parsons strolled together discussing theological problems, and one of the "parsons" herewith asserts his deep admiration for the uniform courtesy, integrity and affability of the priests. Such a trial really made for understanding, for there can be no true understanding where the opposing forces do not face the real issues in a judicial temper! It was at this point that the Bonne Entente of post-war years had failed. Mere flattery and mutual felicitation get nowhere. Ways and means must be discovered whereby groups, face to face, come to grips with the real issues, the real fears, the real suspicions, that keep them hostile. Eastview proved that, with an eminently fair and considerate magistrate for an umpire, a court of law may really be used to ameliorate the tensions which work against the "public good".

All in all, because of Eastview, the Canadian public has, it is to be hoped, a clearer understanding of the ultimate goals of human welfare, and sociology has receive a fresh vindication as the study which seeks to provide a scientific basis for a definition of the public good. May the universities of our country, as well as our courts of law, take all this seriously to heart!

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To a Professor of English Literature

You, sir, whose noble task it is to teach
The complicated mysteries of Speech,
And spread, with lavish hand, before the young
The treasures of our ancient mother-tongue,
To you I turn, as one who sometimes sues
For rare but precious favours from the Muse,
That you may settle, if you'll be so kind,
Some problems that have vexed a simple mind . . .

For rhymes, it used to seem quite clear to me,
Were strict prerequisites for poetry:
(I think I must have learnt this from my nurse —
That though it might be bad, it could be verse)
And for a poet, what was necessary
Was endless patience, and a dictionary.

But now I have discovered
That one may write a poem
Without any rhyme
And without any reason
Provided one has enough words to go around . . .
And what is more, I find a poet can
Write verses now that it is almost impossible and
indeed highly undesirable to scan. . . .

In my young days, when I had caught the beat,
I tapped the measure out with active feet,
For if I chose the breathless sort
With lines that were succinct and short
I couldn't wait, I couldn't waste
A single moment in my haste
But had to keep upon the run
Until the beastly thing was done. . .

But now I find
That no one seems to mind
Or shows any kind
Of pain
If you stop short . . . and then start off again!
And no poet feels called upon to blush
Or hush
His voice or hide his face
When his poem gets quite out of hand and starts running all over the place!
And this is really very nice, of course, because when in your first line you have got quite tired writing such a lot —
Then you naturally relax, and tend
To end
With a .

Now sir, I hope that you'll enlighten me
What is this thing that men call poetry?

W. LYNDEN SMITH.

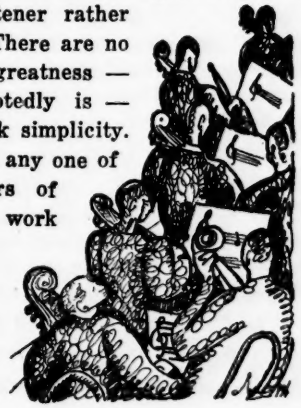
Three Symphonies

CHRISTOPHER WOOD

IT WILL NOT PROVE altogether uninteresting, I think, to consider somewhat critically three symphonic works which have received their first Toronto performance during the past season; and, disregarding Master Dogberry's dictum, to make some comparisons between them. I have found it advisable in an article of this length to confine myself to these three works — with a side glance, perhaps, at one or two others — however attractive it might be to investigate other fields; — which last phrase suggests, rather depressingly, the political pastime of exploring avenues.

The first of the three works is Healey Willan's Symphony No. 1 in D minor. The actual performance of this work by the Promenade Symphony Orchestra conducted by Reginald Stewart has received sufficient praise elsewhere. Considering the supreme difficulties to be encountered in the first playing of a work of such proportions, and the shortness of time available for rehearsal, it was truly remarkable, and it would be almost impossible to laud it too highly. Like nearly all Willan's music it gave one immediately the impression of being written because of an imperative inner compulsion, because that particular musical thought demanded that particular expression, and not because it is a generally nice idea to write a symphony. With the first bars of the slow introduction of the first movement came — if I may be permitted to quote from myself — "the firm conviction of the work's aesthetic significance, that here was nothing dull or academic, but music alive, a hitherto unheard aspect of auricular beauty." The work is in three movements very closely related, and the first and last are in sonata-form. In the latter the recapitulation is considerably shortened, and there is a quite long coda in which there is a weaving of the themes already heard, and the theme of the slow movement — which movement is of a purely rhapsodic nature — is played by the full orchestra. But the detailed consideration of the technical form a work of art takes is not of especial interest except to the student of composition; it is enough to say that the form is not adopted because it is the conventional one to take, but because it is natural to the work. The whole grows as sweetly as a tree, or as a fire burning flows brightly upwards, the development of the thematic material being compact with an ingenuity which is never aridly cerebral, so that the listener is not — as with too many modern works — made painfully conscious of how clever the composer is — and left at that — but is rather borne upward "on the viewless wings of Poesy, though the dull brain perplexes and retards." The themes used are of enchanting loveliness, and that alone would make the work notable in an age not remarkable for beautiful tunes. It is, in short, such a work as flows inevitably from a rich and genial mind, touched, somewhat deeply, with a mysticism not of this age — such a mind as was, perhaps, creative of the rich and wonderful beauty of a Gothic cathedral. In this it differs profoundly from William Walton's first symphony.

For that is most certainly of this age, of the very essence of timeliness. Yet while being timely, Walton's work is not lacking in that element of timelessness without which no work of art can be considered truly great. It is most immediately notable for its almost brutal violence and insistent strength, and for a somewhat severe economy of utterance. The themes in themselves are slight, and the structure grows from groups of these small motives, thus — as with other modern symphonies— breaking from the traditional exposition, development and recapitulation. But from these slight germs of musical thought — which hardly appear like themes to traditional ears — springs a work whose power stuns one. The orchestra used for this symphony is the purely conventional one with the addition of one trumpet only, and there are none of the "dazzling orchestral devices which belong to most music supposed to be representative of this day." Every chord, however harsh and weird to unused ears, every instrument used in a particular way, is but a means to an end, an end profoundly significant however much one may happen to dislike it. It is almost ungracious in its vigorous, straightforward intensity, and demands imperatively the attention of the listener rather than persuading it. There are no frills to it, and its greatness — for great it undoubtedly is — springs from its stark simplicity. I do not think there is any one of the younger composers of the present day whose work is more likely to continue to greater things, or more likely to retain its vitality in the future; though



heaven knows there is so much new work which one does not have the opportunity of hearing in this country, though Sir Ernest MacMillan has done his best for us, and the Russian forcing-bed may, all unbeknownst to me, have produced something really memorable and worthy of its efforts.

Apart from Finlandia and Valse Triste we have not, so far, heard in Toronto more than a few of the works of Sibelius, whose fifth symphony is the third work I propose to consider. Unlike his far younger contemporary, Walton, who writes, for his bread and butter, for the films, Sibelius has lived a large part of his long life somewhat removed from the world — or what with some conceit we call the world — in Finland. And it is worth noting that the Finnish government has made such provision for him that he may compose in peace, which suggests that Finland has reached an enviable stage of civilization. When Canada does something similar for Healey Willan we also may speak of our civilization rather more convincingly than we can at present.

To attempt to trace, in so short an article, and to readers who for the most part, I am bound to assume, have not heard more than the few works of this composer performed in Toronto, the growth of artistic stature which is so notable a feature of Sibelius' work would be a waste of time and of little or no value. To have a "read" knowledge of musical works which one has never actually heard is of very little benefit to anyone and tends to make the person who indulges in it opinionated at second hand. It is possible to note, however, the differences of structure and form between the second symphony and the fifth, or, more correctly, to observe the further development of the same form. "The first movement of Sibelius No. 2," says Constant Lambert, "differs from any previous symphonic movement in that its undoubted continuity and formal balance are not established until the last bars. . . . The exposition of this particular movement, a string of apparently loosely knit episodes, is completely incomprehensive at first hearing, and it is only only towards the end of the development and in the curiously telescoped recapitulation that the full significance of the opening begins to be apparent. Instead of being presented with a fait accompli of a theme which is then analyzed and developed in fragments, we are presented with several enigmatic fragments that only become a fait accompli on the final page." The remainder of the symphony is more or less conventional in form and need not detain us here, in spite of much beautiful and original work. In the fifth symphony we find this formal method fully developed throughout the work. It is apparent immediately to the ear of the fairly well informed concert-goer. The orchestration is superb in its effectiveness, and in its total subordination as a means to an end, and never as an end in itself, as is so frequently the case with modern composers — Stravinsky, for instance. Sibelius' use of the strings is unique; he has developed their potentialities to a greater extent than any other modern composer, and he has permitted the wood-wind and brass to return to their more normal utterance, ignoring the strange sounds which can be drawn from their extreme registers and so on as something not to his purpose. Of all the composers of the present day he is the freest and least tramelled by the conventions of the past, and the even more cloying and adhesive mannerisms of the "moderns." There is the same inner compulsion evident in this fifth symphony as in the Willan symphony, however different in formal structure and emotional content. The same is evident also in the Walton symhony with its still different content. All three composers in their immensely differing ways are individualists, they make their own decisions, using such material as is to their purpose, discarding ruthlessly that which is not. For though Willan's symphony follows pretty closely the traditional symphony form of Beethoven, though not in the second movement, and in the last returning to sonata form, that form seems so natural to it that to have used any other merely because it happens to be more "up-to-date" would have been an insincerity and a slavish adherence to the new for its own sake. It is possible that Willan's second symphony — which is now under construction — may take a form more similar to that of Sibelius, not merely because it is the newer way, but because that form seems to be the more flexible and capable of individual expansion, and less fraught with the dangers into which many of the later romantics fell — Schumann, for instance — a formal vagueness, uncertain whether it is a symphony or a symphonic poem.

Any further comparison between these three works would be worthless unless one was prepared for exhaustive study — which might only prove exhausting — and had almost unlimited space at one's disposal. Their performance cannot fail to have added something to the mind of any sensitive listener, something of inestimable value.

Inscription for the Abdication of a Prime Minister

Here grunts in his familiar pen
One who with equal mind
Betrayed his King, his Countrymen,
And Freedom, and Mankind.

L. A. M.

What's on the Air . . . ?

The Editor,
CANADIAN FORUM.

Respected Sir:

May the eagerness of youth be the excuse of vanity if I dare to hope your magnanimous attention for a conversation between this insignificant person and the learned Doctor Sam Chon Sun.

Self—You tell me, Honored Sir, that the radio situation in my new country of Canada recalls to your distinguished mind the history of the Illustrious Legion of Loud Speakers in Honan, land of our Ancestors. Pray enlighten my depraved and barbarous ignorance with your estimable words, more pungent than the root of ginger, and sweeter than Lichees preserved in the honey of Yunnan.

Doctor—Let us call a truce, my Son, as befits Scholars, to the amiable incense of compliment, and I will tell you a plain tale, as far as my unworthy memory permits, of that obscure and inglorious chapter in our history.

In the time of the Emperor Kao Chu it was discovered that certain men could be trained to hear by mental sympathy and reproduce more or less faithfully at any distance, and with great volume, the sounds of the human voice and even of the Eighty-Seven musical instruments. The merchants of the Southern Republics on our borders at once took possession of this art to recommend and implore the purchase of this man's tea and that man's rice, or the Thirty Thousand and Three popular remedies that at that time made the maintenance of ordinary health a precarious and exciting business. The ears of the unhappy populace were filled with every kind of inharmonious and conflicting noises and appeals, until the cost of maintaining sufficient Rest Homes, Houses of Silence, and Mental Clinics became so great that by common consent the wisdom of our ancestors abolished the whole dangerous and preposterous procedure. In the Northern Kingdom, on the other hand, the Illustrious Legion of Loud Speakers was controlled by a special Chamberlain, a high-class Mandarin of the Imperial Court. We in Honan did, as usual, partly the one, partly the other. In general, such services as paid, were left with the Merchants: such as did not were sustained by a levy of listeners. But, as Wu Pei has said, the tradesman's soul is not only insatiable, but fortunately blind as well; and the Merchants were not content with this advantageous arrangement. With the help of such interests and animosities as maintain and are maintained by Mandarinic factions, they devoted their energies to the overthrow of the enthusiastic but innocent and inexperienced Mandarins who were in charge of the Public Service.

Self—Were these Mandarins, then, generally unpopular?

Doctor—On the whole they were neither violently disliked nor vehemently approved. To the eye of history they seem to have done sober, steady and conscientious, but not ostentatious work, and to have made a sound and economical use of funds and powers far more limited than was generally understood. Yet their position was bound to be impermanent. They were cautious to the point of timidity, and unassertive to the verge of oblivion. They were sparing in the use of public funds, and acquiesced without open protest in the diversion to the Central Chest of half the moneys the citizens of Honan were supplying in the Loud Speaker Levy. They were not amenable to the control of the Merchants, nor could they find lucrative posts for friends and families of whatever faction of Mandarins stood nearest the ear of the Dragon Throne. In short, they neither conciliated existing interests nor took advantage of their opportunity to build up other interests in their own support.

Self—I can perceive that they were indeed innocent souls whom I trust the spirits of their esteemed Ancestors welcomed with tablets and ornaments of white jade. With your leave, Master, I would liken them to babes building paper castles in the den of dragons.

Doctor—Your comparison, my Son, is erudite and exact. These men did not endure. They were abolished with despatch and decorum, after the manner of the illustrious brigand How Long, who in a cork-lined chamber had a slanting frame with a row of notches to hold the end of a noose; and hour by hour, with every mark of consideration, he would go in and shift his captives one notch higher until they gracefully expired.

Self—And how, after that, was the Illustrious Legion of Loud Speakers administered?

Doctor—From the Twelve Parishes were chosen twelve men of distinguished piety who should see to it that the interests of Faction should have due weight and the holy duties of Friendship be properly regarded in all appointments: but forasmuch as these knew nothing or little of the business they were given as Chief Steward an able Chamberlain who, in a similar employ in the Upper Kingdom had, in the words of the sage Chu Tung, "begun at the top of the ladder and painstakingly worked his way to a precarious toe-hold on the bottom rung."

Self—And did the programs then improve?

Doctor—I regret to say that improvement was imperceptible, and it is difficult to say why. Assuredly everything that could be done was done. Administrative salaries were raised, and staffs doubled. The head office alone cost twice what it had before, and in the lower clerical posts where there had been one man there were now five. All men in whom practical experience might hamper the free flow of fancy were unhesitatingly dismissed and their place supplied by sympathetic and deserving souls. More and more funds were placed at the disposal of the Illustrious Legion, and more and more employments discovered for deserving souls. Wider and wider concessions were abandoned to the importunate Merchants of Honan and of the Southern Realms. More and more caravans of horses, camels, mules, asses, and canal-boats bustled to and fro bearing Important Personages about the country at the Legion's expense. Yet some malignant Demon invariably brought it about that the more money was spent on other things the less there was for improvement of programs, and the more attention was devoted to

organization, re-organization, and re-re-organization, the less was left for performance. Indeed, they seemed to resemble the caged squirrel of the illustrious scientist Shan Ti, which, however fast it spun the wheel, could never attain the pine-cone tied to its tail.

Self—And were the people pleased?

Doctor—It is the historic nature of the people of Honan to be never pleased, but always patient. They grumbled and endured and paid, until all the remunerative preliminary expenditures were completed, and the Merchants judged the plums were ripe for plucking. Then, one by one, their spokesmen began to cry, "Who now shall say that we have not given Public Ownership a fair trial? Have we not changed the personnel from top to bottom? Has money not been poured like the Hoang Ho in flood time? And still there is no satisfaction. Furthermore, shall this great power remain the private preserve of a Faction? Or shall we imitate any longer the detestable courses of the depraved tyrants, Lei Nin, Stah Lin, or Mu So Lin? Let us return to a Sane System of Private Enterprise."

Self—And was this done?

Doctor—It was done, my Son. Then, as now, the people of Honan could see results clearly enough, but would accept any explanation of causes that was repeated to them often enough and loud enough.

Self—But the people of Canada?

Doctor—The people of Canada, my esteemed Son, are a Superior Race; but was it not observed by your illustrious Ancestor, Wun Lung Gon, that "the pheasants of Kan-Su surpass the pheasants of Sze-Chwan; but both are caught in the same trap."

Your unworthy and inconsiderable Devoted Reader,

WUN LONG CHU.

From the Seats of the Mighty

EUGENE FORSEY

SOME LITTLE TIME AGO I had an hour's conversation with two responsible officers of an important business organization. Both were university graduates, both had travelled fairly widely. One was in his early forties, the other in his early thirties. Both were thoroughly nice, kindly, decent.

We were discussing the policy of the C.C.F. The elder of the two insisted that the C.C.F. advocated minimum wages for people who wouldn't work and "subsidies" to "radical thinkers" (by which, it gradually appeared, he meant Communists). I asked for evidence in support of this charge. He replied that the C.C.F. believed in minimum wages for everyone; "everyone" included people who wouldn't work; therefore the C.C.F. believed in minimum wages for people who wouldn't work! The same masterly reasoning established the other proposition: the C.C.F. advocated non-contributory unemployment insurance for everyone; "everyone" included "radical thinkers"; therefore the C.C.F. advocated "subsidies to radical thinkers". Both gentlemen seemed genuinely surprised when I suggested that this sort of "argument" was merely an abuse of the English language.

They were more than surprised when I agreed that a C.C.F. government would certainly pay unemployment insurance and minimum wages to Communists as to other people, regardless of their opinions. To make my point clear, and to find some common ground, I instanced a case I had heard of a few days before. The president of one of Canada's largest corporations had stated, in the hearing of a friend of mine, that he had just discharged an employee for being a Communist. The man's work had been perfectly satisfactory; but he was a Communist, so he had to go. I repeated this, with the comment that of course everyone would agree that such an action was utterly indefensible. To my amazement, instead of agreeing, they stared at me as if they could hardly believe their ears. "What! You don't mean to say you think the man should have been kept on?" It was my turn to stare: "What! You don't mean to say you think he should have been let out?" When it became clear that I really did think the man should have been kept on they were as horrified as if I had declared myself a cannibal. I insisted that if a man did his work properly it was none of his employer's business what his opinions were or what he did with his spare time. Both gentlemen at once exclaimed that this was a "very extreme view." No man had any right to "undermine his employer", even in his spare time. It was because of his employer that he had any spare time.

Neither of them, apparently, had ever heard this idea questioned. They took it for granted that when an employer hires a workman he hires body, mind and soul. They would doubtless have been completely mystified if I had told them this is simply slavery and idolatry.

Of such is the kingdom of Fascism.

Satires From Science

2. The Pecking Order among Hens

Cellinis, Casanovas, Byrons
Have studied Eve in her environs,
And sent abroad a hundred theses
Anent the female of the species.
Sad to relate, their generalizations
Have not enhanced their reputations,
For though they run no risk of facing
The charge of not being all-embracing,
And claim at least the doubtful glory
Of viewing the subject con amore,
The fact remains — convincing lovers
Are not on sale in purple covers,
And those whose thoughts are thus encrusted
Are very rarely to be trusted.

"But," you will answer, "Shades of Pluto!
Who can dispense with Benvenuto?
Who for long remain a rover
From rakish, knowing Casanova?
What Son of Eve has every carolled
More wistfully than young Childe Harold?"
I reply: "Place your reliance
Rather on the men of science:
Read, if woman you would know,
'Le Despotisme entre les Oiseaux,'
By Schelderup-Ebbe who, scanning hens
Under the scientific lense,
Encountered Homo sapiens."

Go to the farm, thou sluggard, and
Consider Cocles, in command
Of a dozen females, all intent
On acquiring needed nourishment.
Rooster Tarquin heaves in sight
And Cocles calls him out to fight:
Beaks and spurs come into play,
Bodies crash in mortal fray,
Combs drip blood and feathers fly
And the soul of a cock is near the sky.
Meanwhile the hens, like a sensible jury,
Stay unimpressed by the sound and fury.
Watch them, beaks upon the ground,
Seizing the spoils their eyes have found:
Mild they seem, devoted, pensive,
Innocent, busily inoffensive.
Mark, however! Each pecks other,
Sister sister, daughter mother:
The henpecked, further, show no fight,
But take to acquiescent flight;
And so it goes — a beak swoops down
On a worm or a gallinaceous crown,

Which brings us now to our recorder
Schelderup-Ebbe's Pecking Order.

He found this: Two hens, on meeting,
Settle which beats, which takes the beating —
Which can peck the other hen
And never be pecked back again.
A tames B, suppose we say —
Then A pecks B, but not she A.
C and D join A and B —
Presto! the foursome straight agree
That A is boss, can fire B,
Who bullies C, who browbeats D,
And once in place, none ever queries
This descending pecking series.
So, in Europe's courts, a duchess
Dreads a marchioness's clutches;
So the daughter of an earl
Takes nothing from a viscount's girl;
These agree that there are tsetse
Flies on the lowly baronetcy:
The baroness thinks mistress knight
So far below, she's out of sight.
The feathered hens, however, differ
From these in one respect — that if a
Hen is A and pecks the rest
She may, to one, be second best:
B nor assaults nor batters A
But — here's the rub — some other may;
Thus A may pummel B, C, D
And yet accept a jab from E,
The martyr hen to all the three.

Our moral now: The ways of hens
Are much like women's ways and men's.
But in our world of Yea and Nay
Where on earth does E peck A?
Where is an A that cedes a Yea
Or an E that can answer A with Nay?

J. F.

Contemporary Canadian Artists

G. CAMPBELL McINNES

No. 4---André Biéler

IN 1931, CANADIANS of French origin numbered nearly 3,000,000 — almost 30 per cent of our population; yet, in making a survey of the art field, one could easily count French-Canadians who are doing significant work on the fingers of one hand. The reason for this is two-fold — social and racial. Peasants from the north of France, alone in a hostile land, with a rigidly paternalistic religion, the talents of the French-Canadian were naturally canalized into church decoration and ecclesiastical architecture. In this realm they achieved work of lasting importance, and created our first indigenous art. But by 1850, English and American infiltration had done their fell work, and the school dropped out of sight. Then, with freedom from ecclesiastical work came economic domination, from which the race, artistically, has yet to emerge. During the last fifty years, a few names have gained deserving face — Suzor-Cote, Philippe Hebert, and later, Laliberte and Gagnon. But among the younger men the field, so far, seems to be restricted to Jean Palardy, Marc-Aurele Fortin, Albert Cloutier, and André Biéler.

Technically, Biéler is a Swiss; he was born in that country forty years ago. But he came to Canada while a child and has lived most of his life in Montreal. His art, like himself, is vivid, energetic, colorful, thoroughly vital and sincere. A fine European background, including excellent technical training, a familiarity with the work of Morrice and the Group of Seven, and a love not only of the Canadian scene but of the Canadian people, have been fused into a personal expression such as that which is reproduced opposite. While painters in Ontario have in general been content to depict pure landscape, usually well off the beaten track, Quebec painters — perhaps because the ceaseless activity of people is more in evidence, have tended to be as much interested in them as in the landscape.

Biéler is interested in both, and especially in any form of lively activity. He recognizes that people and soil interact on one another; he looks out of his window and sets down his immediate environment in strong, bright colors and half realized forms. His finished canvasses have the spontaneity, the brief, fleeting statement of sketches, yet they are organized and carefully thought out. For though he is that rarest of rare things, a French expressionist — a sort of gay, unsoured Rouault, without his terrifying profundity — he has the deeply implanted classic approach which enables him to work out his subject matter in a thoroughly painterly manner. A flood of light fills his paintings and his color is almost exuberant, but both these qualities are held firmly in place by a sensitiveness to values and a hardheaded realism.

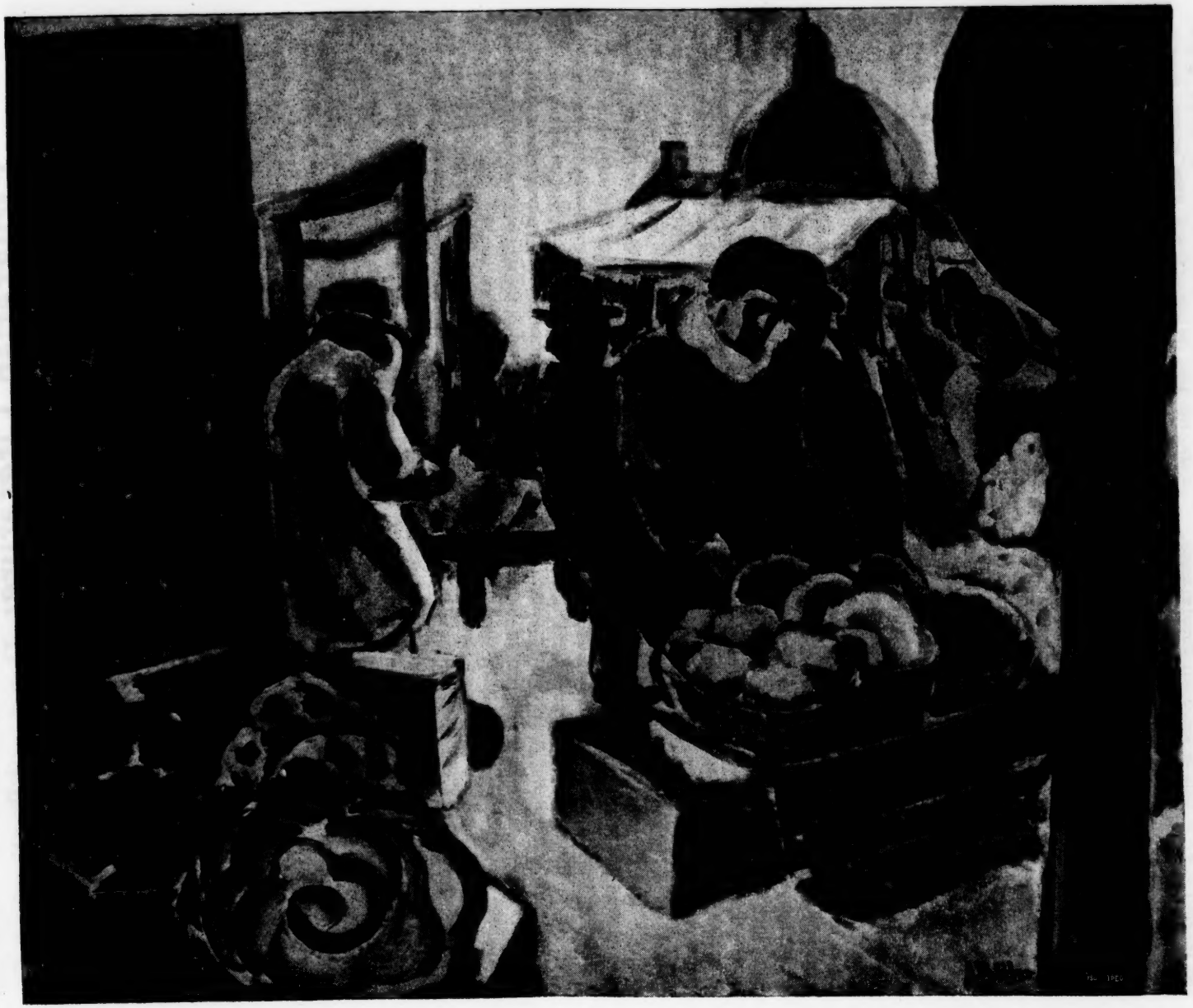
"The Market—Kingston", on the opposite page, is a typical Biéler statement about his surroundings. Though apparently sketchy, the types are shrewdly observed, the lively atmosphere is created through color and form, and at the same time a pleasing pattern is created, the painting arranging itself in a kaleidoscope of gay color round the focal point, somewhat to the left of and below the dome in the background. It is — as are nearly all Bieler's workers — a picture which the artist enjoyed painting.

Biéler seeks his subject matter mostly in his native province of Quebec, along the St. Laurence, and in the Laurentians, chronicling the activities of his people. He was recently appointed Resident Artist at Queen's University, where his forceful personality has found fresh scope, and where new subject matter is occupying his busy, restive brush.

Tasmanian

A Tasmanian cannot click his teeth
Or stretch his legs at dawn,
Feeling smooth muscles.
He cannot walk under a fresh purity of sky
Or rub against his fellows,
Rejoicing in their companionship
And the nourishment of voices.
He cannot see soft colors,
Breathe deeply
And do strong deeds.
He cannot . . . he cannot . . .
The Tasmanians are a lost race!

ALAN CREIGHTON.



The Market---
Kingston

André Biéler

Proletarian Literature: Theory and Practice

EARLE BIRNEY

RALPH FOX and Tom Wintringham, co-founders of the LEFT REVIEW, are names now to be added to the list of British left-wing writers who have been killed fighting for the Spanish government. All who strive against capitalism must, irrespective of party and creed, deeply regret their deaths. It is therefore not easy to suggest an evaluation of Ralph Fox's "Novel and the People", now posthumously published.* Many of its surface flaws, its repetitions and hasty generalizations, are no doubt there because its author knew that the cause of the Spanish workers is of more immediate importance than the polishing of an historical essay on the European novel.

By and large, the book seeks to apply the theory of the Popular Front to the art of fiction (even the title fits with the new Comin-turn). The novel is treated as the great folk-epic of the bourgeois; its heyday was the eighteenth-century; it declined in the hands of the Victorian romantics and sentimentalists, and is now disintegrating with the break-up of capitalism; it can be revived and improved only by a popular front of writers devoted to a "new socialist realism". The author proposes a possible plot for the new epic in the story of Dimitrov — and, in the process, relates a version of the Reichstag Trial which subtly idealizes Dimitrov and the German Communist Party at the expense both of his comrades at the trial (who are no longer Kosher) and of all the other socialists who disagreed with the Stalinites.

These are sectarianisms to be argued, however, with the living. Ralph Fox has written here many things which came out of his own earnest heart and his alert, manysided mind; it is with these that we may fitly concern ourselves now.

Fox's conception of the greatest novels as "epic" in character is stimulating and fruitful. Though he accepts the function of the novel as the telling of story to reveal character, he reminds us that the novelists whose fame seems most permanent (he lists Cervantes and Rabelais at the top, then such as Defoe, Fielding, Tolstoi, Balzac, Hardy) are those who were not afraid to philosophize. Degeneration comes with the theory of "art for art's sake", which Fox calls only "a hopeless answer to art for money's sake". Flaubert, hating the bourgeois who buy his novels, must yet write only about them and for them while he dreams wistfully of composing the perfect novel, all style, "a book about nothing."

In our own century this retreat from epic breadth and realism "has ended in a panic rout". More novels are being produced every day "but it is the unreadable which is being read". Instead of works like Fielding's, which combine, humor, gusto, human portraiture and action, with an historical sense, and an integrated view of life, we have novels meant to be only funny, or only exciting, Wodehouses, detectives, mystic prose-poems (D. H. Lawrence), isolated character portraits, or "detached" slices-of-life with the slices cut exceedingly thin. We have novel-segments but the Novel is gone and with it has gone the Hero. Fox regrets their loss, and, though he does not wish a simple return to Fielding he urges the writers of the Left to learn from the eighteenth century that the novel is a great and complex form, capable of ranging through all modes of prose expression. He wants them to use that form as Shakespeare used the drama, to "show man in action to change his conditions". Unlike Shakespeare, the Marxist novelist would, I take it, show that Man eventually alters his life for the better.

Measured against such ideals the so-called "proletarian novelists" of our thirties suffer a deserved snub. Hasty exceptions are made for pioneers in the new epic (Dos Passos, Bates, Malraux, and Caldwell), but the majority are reminded of the many ways in which Marx would have disowned them. Against the notion that the proletarian artist must be an open ranter is set the remark of Engels that "the more the opinions of the author remain hidden, the better for the work of art". Opinion must be there to give meaning to the art, but opinions as such can easily be borrowed, if they are in fashion; they cannot make up for a want of craftsmanship, nor for an ignorance about the complex realities of working-class character. The Worker is not simply, incoherent, passive, as in Hemingway's stories; he is not Elmer Rice's mechanized man; nor can the varied world in which he lives be exhausted in the stock types of the villainous Boss, the Idealistic Intellectual, and the Good Strike-Leader. The proletariat is not revealed either by photographing the cross-section of an individual on the slide of a Freudian microscope or by assembling the Masses "in the grip of inexorable economic forces". All these methods may be used in the socialist epic but they will be fused by the genuinely Marxist view, which is that each man has both a personal and a social history and that in

* Francis White (Lawrence & Wishart); pp. 172; $1.25.

their interplay lies the essential meaning of history.

It is interesting, if unfair, to turn from these dicta to one of the most recent and most-praised "proletarian novels", Arthur Calder-Marshall's "Pie in the Sky.*" Mr. Marshall's book is scarcely the epic Ralph Fox visualized, but it does not attempt to be. It does seek, in the words of one of its characters, to cut through the cable of English life in 1935-36 and show the interrelations of the threads. But the cross-section thus revealed gives little promise of the socialist evolution which Marxists see. True, it is written with that artistic concealment which Engels (and Flaubert) demanded. Its proletarians are not abstractions, and its Factory Boss is one of the most life-like capitalists which a left-wing novelist has yet created. But its radicals are unconvincing; they provide another instance of Fox's remark that "the least credible figures in the novels written about revolutions are the revolutionaries". A sufficient instance of the unreal talk of Mr. Marshall's "Party" members is that in the year 1936 they refer casually to both Stalin and Trotsky and to both the Third and Fourth Internationals, with equal calm and approval. The author is plainly using such revolutionaries for atmosphere and fashionable value, and he is afraid to develop them lest their energy and clear-thinking and determination will distract attention from the shiftier Bohemians in whom Marshall is really more interested.

The latter are well drawn. There is the oversubtle Fenner Yorke, who hovers on the edge of the Party, doing nothing for it, "repelled alike by the anemia of the intellectuals and the bloodiness of the full-blooded". At times he seems suspiciously autobiographical. There is Alec Seconds (né Deuteropopoff), dreamy radical and restauranteur, who comes to suspect that all the talk about the workers' state is just as much "Pie in the Sky" as the capitalists' rot; he deserts the comrades to run an illegal night-club for sugar-daddies "searching in the bottom of their whisky glasses for a youth they never had". He is gypped by his boss and wanders back to the "movement", still romantic, but defeated.

Though the book pretends to no individual focussing, it actually centres around half a dozen other beings who are beyond the boundaries of the radicals. One of these is Fenner's father, Carder, self-made factory owner, domineering, lusty, and lustful, and Carder's other son, Bernard, who, thanks to his father, is at 34 "a stammerer, afraid of women and nearly bald". Carder has unconsciously made Bernard what he is and kept him that way because Carder had a Puritan conscience which interfered with his lecheries, and he liked to be reassured, by the sight of Bernard, that piety and virginity were not worth the price. Then there is Ozerkoff, the mad tobacconist, who daily goes off to the zoo to "study the yuman species" and daily threatens to kill himself; he is eventually run over by a bus.

Finally, there is 'Enry Bolton, authentic proletarian but no revolutionary. He and Carder Yorke had been factory hands together, but Carder stayed home and wormed up to the managership while Henry went to war, came back to his old job with failing eyesight, slipped, and was hurt on a dark factory stairway, losing his job to a younger man. But he is a "sticker" and goes wandering over the English road looking for work; falsely convicted of poaching an eight-penny rabbit, he comes out of jail embittered but still no Marxist. When he tries to give Carder Yorke the hiding he deserves Henry is frustrated by the weakness of his own half-starved body, and must ignominiously accept jobs for himself and wife as house-servants to Carder. Mrs. Bolton reminds him that "somethin's better'n nothin'." "Is it?' he asked. "I wonder. Seems to me some thin's are worse'."

In Bolton's fate there is the stuff of real tragedy, tragedy as representative of our times, as pregnant for revolution, as any "proletarian novel" could wish. But for Mr. Marshall, Henry's problem is only one in "a world full of purposes that cancel out". There is no one increasing purpose. Mr. Marshall has written a good novel; his style, if sometimes artificially simple, is generally vivid, subtle, trenchant; there is much acute observation and ironic humor. But "Pie in the Sky" is too diffuse, too self-conscious in its anti-climaxes, too unsteady in characterization to be a great novel. And by no logic can it be called "proletarian".

Indeed, few have yet earned the right to be called proletarian artists; one of the few is Ernst Toller, whose recent collection of prison letters and poems, "Look Through the Bars", has just been issued in an America edition with prefaces by the author and his translator, R. Ellis Roberts.* Here is a book which is compelling enough as the record of a noble and sensitive character through five years of suffering and endurance, and as tragic documentation to the history of modern Germany; but it is perhaps even more valuable as a testament, by a great pioneer in the modern drama, of his artistic loyalty to the working class.

Toller's early life-story may serve as a warning guide to those artists who seek to be "proletarian". Born a bourgeois, shoved into the war at 19, emerging a pacifist and socialist, he came to believe that

* Nelson (Cape); pp. 477; $2.25.

* Farrar & Rinehart; pp. 310; $2.75.

he must identify himself with the workers at the expense of his hatred of war and at the risk of his talents and his life. He became commander of the workers' army defending the Bavarian People's Republic, was arrested after its defeat and sentenced by the German Republic itself, along with hundreds of others, to five years in a fortress. He refused a pardon since it was not also offered to his fellow socialists; such a release would confuse the issues for which he had fought, and he served the full term.

What that sacrifice meant can be realized only from reading these letters to his wife, and to his many friends and enemies in the world of art and politics beyond the walls. He had to suffer the daily tyrannies of jailers, and the vindictiveness and stupidity of the prison censorship set up by that self-destroying Republic which continued to persecute him while it released and forgave Hitler and the other reactionary putschists; he sees comrades "shot while attempting to escape" and narrowly misses the same fate himself. And these trials are little compared with the daily fight against the misanthropy which prison induces, the increasing irritability, the retirement into loneliness, the weakening of the will, in that fortress where "time is a grey mist that settles in the pores."

The very fact that he elected to stay helps him to survive, reassured by the strength of his own will. That, and the creative power which will not be defeated even in such a prison. Two swallows build a nest in his cell; he manages to conceal their breach of discipline from the warder, to write a series of simple and moving lyrics (here reprinted in their final form) in their honor, and to find a friend to smuggle the manuscript out on tiny pieces of paper, "in an unprintable manner".

In such macabre ways does the real revolutionary literature come into being in this epoch of counter-revolution. Proletarian art, as the art of class-conscious and struggling men, can be little more than a lucky incident in a career primarily devoted to the more direct and urgent tasks of political argument and political struggle. It is the paradox of that struggle that the worker-writer must be ready to sacrifice his own artistic fruition in order that the heritage of past cultures, bourgeois among them, may be rescued and preserved and a finer society attained — a society which will unfold no earthly paradise but in which the artists of the future will have room to build upon the creative achievements of mankind.

It is with such a vision that Toller has written this moving and tragic book. Proletarian art, he says, must, if it have any meaning, be in the first place art, with its roots in a personal experience, and its problems the eternal problems of mankind; it should not be designed to perform the work of party-resolutions, for that is the job of the party, nor should it be a sectarian rejection of bourgeois form for rejection's sake. Nevertheless, it should not forget to be proletarian; it should be written out of the ranks of the workers and in a speech they understand—written for them, for the "purging of their passions".

In that sense it will be propagandist, for "every word written by a poet is 'propagandist' insofar as one regards as 'propaganda' a human appeal". Toller has nothing but disgust for those playwrights who "evade the conflicts that make the tragedy of our time". In prison he writes his famous "Masses and Man", and "The Machine Breakers". In these he is not afraid to ennoble the revolutionary, whose fight is that of all civilization for survival. But that battle is not yet won, and if the artist is to help in the winning of it he must not sentimentalize. He must write so that the worker can "see himself, himself in his spiritual crudity . . ., his helplessness, . . . his cowardice, his despondency, his infidelity to himself and the Cause; hear himself talk and be talked over; excuse and accuse, laugh and be laughed at . . . If we don't develop by our works his spiritual and intellectual forces, if we don't produce those delicately ramified relations which bind men to an idea, to a poem, all we shall do is to breed party groups, never communities."

Here is the ideal for proletarian art — but can it be achieved before the proletarian society? A Marxist should scarcely expect the literary revolution to precede the economic. This is not a question which Toller faces in his book, but it is perhaps answered in the brilliant failures of the Marshalls and by the fact that Toller walked out of prison into political conflict, and that Auden and his comrade-artists must suspend poetry to fight where Fox and many other hopes for proletarian art have already perished.

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Facts, Figures and Finance

NOTE: In future all indices given on this page will, unless otherwise stated, be percentages of the 1929 monthly average.

Business Conditions

Physical volume of business in February was 91.6 (83.5 last year), industrial production 92.4 (82.4), manufacturing 98.9 (85.9), mineral production 137.8 (134.2). Coal production, copper, nickel and zinc exports, and rubber imports, were considerably below last year. Construction was slightly up: 27.7 as against 27.1. Most of the other indices of production were considerably above 1936. Employment in all industries (unadjusted: adjusted indices for 1929 not available, as far as I can discover) was 86.4 (83.1 last year), in manufacturing 92 (85). It is interesting to compare the positions of production and employment indices in particular industries; newsprint production 139.5; pulp and paper employment 88.3; iron and steel production 74.6, employment 81; automobile production 75.8, employment (including the parts industry) 104.9; electric power production 152.2, employment 88; tobacco released for consumption 106.5, employment 110.1. This subject, however, deserves an article to itself, and will be dealt with at length at an early date.

The Canadian Bank of Commerce reports that industries whose records are available to it operated in March at 75 per cent. or better, a fairly large proportion at full capacity, while several could not keep pace with new orders. Industrial production was about 15 per cent. better than in 1936. The Royal Bank states that physical volume of business for the early part of the year has been about ten per cent. ahead of last year.

Dividends

Gross dividends for the first quarter of 1937 were $49,600,000, an increase of $10,100,000 over 1936. The Nesbitt Thompson index was 91.2, compared with 72.9 last year.

The net total of mining dividends in 1936 seems to have been about $78,912,000, compared with $59,525,000 in 1935.

Relief

The Dominion Minister of Labour announces that February relief figures are down 12.3 per cent. for the whole country, and 15.7 per cent. for outside the drought areas, as compared with the same month last year. If the Minister's figures make no allowance for the discontinuance of relief in New Brunswick or for the farm placement scheme, his percentages should be cut just about in half.

The Quebec Government is now proposing to spend some $8,000,000 in settling unemployed on the land, a policy on the same level of economic literacy as the current proposals for large-scale agricultural immigration.

Bank Deposits

Notice deposits in the chartered banks at October 31, 1936, were as follows:

Group	Number	pctg.	(millions) Amount	pctg.
Under $1,000	3,664,756	92.33	$ 432.5	28.63
$1,000-$5,000	268,525	6.76	537.1	35.56
$5,000-$25,000	34,224	.86	297.6	19.7
$25,000-$100,000	2,313	.058	99.1	6.56
Over $100,000	496	.012	141.3	9.35
Totals	3,970,314		$ 1,510.3 (adjusted)	

Mr. F. C. Biggar, of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, states that corporations own more than half the total sum in accounts of $5,000 or over in both notice and demand deposits. Details?

Newsprint

The clause in newsprint contracts by which the price automatically fell to the lowest price quoted by any mill with a rated capacity of 100,000 tons hitherto the bane of the industry, is now understood to apply to only 3 to 5 per cent. of the Canadian production. This, with the price increases recently announced by leading producers and the level of production approaching capacity, gives promise of reasonably high and stable prices.

National Income, 1936

The Financial Post estimates national income for 1936 at about $4,520,000,000, compared with $4,094,000,000 in 1935. Agriculture showed an improvement of 10.6 per cent., or slightly better than the average; its total was $746,968,000. Mining was 15.4 per cent. above 1935, manufacturing 8.6, forestry 19, power 9.4, construction 3.5.

Prices and Wages

Various newspapers tell us that higher wages must mean higher prices in the same degree. (We never hear the converse when it is a question of wage cuts.) President Roosevelt, however, says that figures coming to him from the Central Statistical Board show that steel prices are far above a level justified by the recent wage increases in the industry. (Montreal Gazette, April 2).

"Foreign Corporations"

A recent report of the Tariff Board drew attention to a former recommendation that wholly owned Canadian subsidiaries of foreign automobile corporations should be "requested" to publish annually their balance sheets and financial statements. Why the delay?

E.A.F.

This Month's Competition

REPORT ON COMPETITION No. 4

The most remarkable thing about the Anticipatory Epitaphs submitted was the extent to which the abdication of King Edward overshadowed all other themes, and the complete unanimity with which the poets took the King's side. Mr. Aberhart and Mr. Hepburn, in the order named, provided the next most popular themes.

The final preference was given to none of these; but to a suggested epitaph for Mr. Henry Ford, by Margaret J. E. Ennis, of Edmonton, Alta., which has neatness, ingenuity, and point.

> Disturb him not, who now atones
> For rattling other people's bones.

The following, too, deserve mention:

On Mr. Frank Underhill:

> Here he lies, the black sod o'er him
> His earthly lot was too much Forum
> MARGARET ENNIS.

as do also

> Here, beyond hope of profit or of prize,
> From simple force of habit, Baldwin lies.
> "ALBATROSS'

> Here lies, in ghostly pomp arrayed
> Of crozier, cope, and mitre,
> A Presbyterian renegade,
> And a d——d dirty fighter.
> H. MACALISTER.

CONTEST No. 5

A prize of $5.00 is offered for the best criticism of The Canadian Forum, in not more than three hundred words, prose or verse.

CONTEST NO. 5.—

The rules are:

1—Address Monthly Contest Editor, The Canadian Forum, 28 Wellington Street West, Troonto.

2—No mss, are returned, and any may be printed in part or in whole, whether awarded a prize or not.

3—Members of The Canadian Forum Board are not eligible to compete.

4—The decision of the Contest Editor is final; he need not award a prize if he considers no entry is worthy of award.

5—Entries must reach the Contest Editor by the 10th of each month.

O CANADA!

($1 will be paid for the clipping heading this column)

"Then we played seven holes. I got just one good drive. And Mr. Rockefeller said: 'That should be worth a nickel', and made me take one. And near the end I got a great pitch shot, and he said: 'that's surely worth another nickel' — and he gave me another, the lovely old Christian — for that's just what I believe he is."
—Mr. Rodheaver, interviewed by R. E. Knowles in the Toronto Daily Star.

* * *

As I say, this relief question is a matter of psychology . . . To my mind the less we talk about relief and unemployment the better it will be for the country.
—Mr. Robichaud, reported in Hansard, March 29.

* * *

Mr. Nicol said . . . he believed it is well to have a definition of Communism and included therein, as Communists, could be classed those who daily vilify public men.—Montreal Daily Star.

* * *

A nation's attitude toward the Sabbath is a good thermometer of its life. Look at countries where this commandment is openly flouted and ignored — what do we find? Strife and chaos, blight and decay, corruption and vice — and judgment always follows. Hands off the sabbath.—Letter in the Toronto Globe and Mail.

* * *

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CANADIAN RAILWAYS
By Sir Edward Beatty
—From the cover of the Canadian edition of Liberty.

* * *

Mrs. Gilmore withdrew her daughter from the school, observing that it was hardly cricket of the teachers to destroy the faith of the children in the stork before they taught them how to read and write.
—Roslyn, N.Y., despatch in The Toronto Globe and Mail.

This month's prize goes to Mr. D. W. Macdonald, Toronto.

ANNOUNCEMENT
of the
CANADIAN FORUM SHORT STORY CONTEST AWARD

The CORNFIELD
by
Luella Bruce Creighton

- The Cornfield, by Luella Bruce Creighton, has been judged the winner of the $50.00 prize offered by The Canadian Forum for the best short story submitted in the contest.
- The Cornfield will be published in the June issue, together with the names of the authors whose work received honorable mention. These will be accompanied by a comprehensive criticism, by Earle Birney, literary editor of The Canadian Forum, of the stories submitted in the contest.
- Morley Callaghan, Bertram Brooker and Earle Birney acted as judges.

SPRING BOOKS

Upper Canada Methodism

EGERTON RYERSON, His Life and Letters; Vol. I; C. B. Sissons; Clarke Irwin—Oxford University Press; pp. 601; $4.00.

WHAT IS THERE about Canadian Methodism which makes its denominational histories and biographies such outstanding works? Our other religious bodies in English-speaking Canada seem to be incapable of producing anything but monuments of denominational piety which may interest the curious student of religious psychology but have little significance for the Canadian historian or political scientist. The reason for the pre-eminence of the Methodists is clear. Anglicans, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics in the English settlements of one hundred years ago were merely carrying on the work of God in an obscure outlying section of the British Empire. The Methodists were helping to build up a native Canadian civilization. Next to the French habitants they are our first real Canadians. And the spirit of these pioneers has somehow inspired their later historians. Professor Sissons' Life of Ryerson at once takes its place alongside of the late Chancellor Burwash's History of Victoria College as a great contribution not merely to the story of early Methodism in Canada but also to the history of the growth of Canadian nationalism itself.

This volume covers the first 37 years of Ryerson's life down to the death of Sydenham in 1841. Mr. Sissons has made use for the first time in any comprehensive way of the mass of Ryerson papers in the Victoria College Archives, and he is able to tell the story in much more detail than any of his predecessors. He quotes at length from the correspondence between Ryerson, his brothers, his fellow Methodist ministers, and the leading public men of Canada and Britain. In fact, he pretty well allows them to tell their own story. And the result is fascinating. There were five Ryerson brothers in the Methodist ministry, four of whom were obviously men of remarkable ability. They played a big part in building up the Methodist denomination in Upper Canada. Egerton himself was, of course, intimately concerned with the two great achievements of the Methodists in those days, Upper Canada Academy and the Christian Guardian. In his editorial capacity he took the lead in the struggle against the Clergy Reserves, he was responsible for the breach with Mackenzie which was to have such tragic results for the Reform cause, and he did great service to Poulett Thomson when the Compact was finally ousted from its hold on office. As a leader in Conference he was one of those chiefly responsible for the union with the British Wesleyans in 1832 and the breach with them in 1840. The documents which Mr. Sissons prints throw new light on all these events; and, in what they tell us of Ryerson's negotiations with the Colonial office in London and with Colborne, Head, Arthur and Thomson in Canada, they are of very great importance for Canadian political history.

There are a few questions which one would like to ask of Mr. Sissons after reading this book. He has explained convincingly Ryerson's non-party policy, as between Tories and Reformers in the colony; but we still need more light on what went on behind the scenes just before the English Wesleyans decided to intervene, and one would like to know a little more about the Methodists who refused to follow the Ryerson lead against Mackenzie. On behalf of Mackenzie himself there is more to be said than would appear from these pages—see, for example, the brilliant article by Professor R. A. MacKay on "The Political Ideas of William Lyon Mackenzie", in the current number of the Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science. Above all, a non-religious layman would like to know whether Ryerson had any inner spiritual life which afforded him a haven from the public controversies in which he was almost continuously engaged. He and his fellow ministers speak the language of evangelical unction to one another most fluently, but in the end one remains skeptical. In his later life, at any rate, Ryerson's mental and moral fibre coarsened very noticeably. This, alas, is the fate which befalls most politicians during a long career. As Sir John Colborne reminded him unkindly in 1831, "there are few individuals who think that ministers of the Gospel can conduct political journals and keep themselves unspotted from the world".

This is an indispensable book for all students of Canadian history. It should also delight everyone who is interested in Canadian literature. For in Egerton's brother, John, Mr. Sissons has discovered the most wonderful letter-writer that our country has yet produced. He rightly characterizes John's letters as intimate and explosive. John was so sturdily independent in his use of the King's English, as well as in his judgment of English Governors and English Wesleyan missionaries, that he should have been more radical in his politics. I have room for only one extract. It is from a letter to Egerton,

who is in London at the time, about the 1836 elections.

"The Radicals met with a most tremendous overthrow & they came down so suddenly & so swiftly from their lofty elevation that they felt it & still feal it most sensibely. They were just about to cease the prey & behold it was instantly & forever hid, if not from their wicked eyes, yet from the reach of their vulture grasp. . . . The preachers & I laboured to the utmost to keep every scamp of them out & we succeeded. And had the preachers of done their duty in every place, not a ninny of them would have been returned to this parliment. . . . The Governor is a frolicking little cur as you ever saw & he takes good care to let everyone know that he 'esteams every day alike', traveling on Sabbaths the same as other days. Indeed he seams to have no idea of religion atoll, but is purely a man of plasure."

What a joy Canadian history would be if we had only more John Ryersons in it.

FRANK H. UNDERHILL.

G. B. S. Respectful

WILLIAM MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM: Bernard Shaw; Macmillan; pp. 52; $1.75.

THE SPECTACLE of Mr. Shaw being respectful in print to anyone is almost too unnerving to be quite pleasant; Mr. Shaw writing respectfully for fifty pages is a portent that has not happened since "The Quintessence of Ibsenism". But William Morris entirely deserves this long-distance feat — not only a great man, but an astonishingly versatile artist, and a practical politician who toiled for the good of his fellows with a gusto that most of us reserve for golf. He was perhaps the noblest of those big-chested Victorians who not only produced fine work but an immense amount of it; a delightful poet, decorator, printer and prose-writer, he worked with the brute energy of a steam-shovel.

Here is an engaging contribution to the history of Socialism in England. We find several vivid pictures of Mr. Shaw's early associates, the best being H. M. Hyndman. "In old age he looked like God in Blake's illustrations to Job." "Had Morris been accompanied by Plato, Aristotle, Gregory the Great, Dante, Thomas Aquinas, Milton and Newton, Hyndman would have taken the chair as their natural leader without the slightest misgiving." His style shows all the old crisp clearness, but (how could it be helped?) far less of the old peerless trenchancy. Perhaps the single reminder of his former dogmatism comes when he describes "Siguord The Volsung", as the greatest epic since Homer. I have noted but one slovenly sentence: "As to any sort of coercive interference on his part it was inconceivable". And he is over eighty! This charming memoir does no discredit to the greatest living writer of English prose.

GILBERT NORWOOD.

The Old and the Young

THE CROQUET PLAYER: H. G. Wells; MacMillan; pp. 98; $1.25.

TEN DAYS OFF: George Dunn; Cape-Nelson; pp. 287; $2.50.

IT IS A CURIOUS EXPERIENCE for one belonging to what Mr. George Dunn describes as "the half generation before me which had been so blunted by the Great War that now it trembled and wavered and knew not what to do or where to turn" to read, first, "The Croquet Player", this perfect story of H. G. Wells, written with such mastery and such restraint, so quiet, so true and so terrible, and then, "Ten Days Off," an incredibly glib outpouring of adolescent exuberance, yet fresh and forceful enough to make one recognize it as the voice at least of some of the young men of today. So much indeed is packed into these ten days that one might suspect that the author had determined to introduce every kind of excitement that a well-bred, well-connected and thoroughly normal youth could desire; everything, that is, but soft dalliance or passion, mentioned only occasionally to be spurned with a Spartan contempt or an Olympian impatience. We are further entertained by the flashings of a bright consciousness, of which it is perhaps hardly fair to choose this particular example, prompted by a walk down Whitehall: "Round about it all the Empire went on, nourishing Whitehall with its questioning adolescence," and so on to the dream of a real League of Nations as a "great family of peoples with the British Crown as the focal point".

There is no youthful gaiety like this in Mr. Wells' fable, but an effect of horrifying reality as the bewildered croquet-player, for the first time shaken out of his comfortable complacency, relates the strange tale of the hallucinations of a psychoneurotic patient, and then the interpretation provided by the eminent phychiatrist in charge of the case. "The reason why he has made it all up into that story . . . is because the realities that are overwhelming him are so monstrous and frightful that he has to transform them into this fairy tale about old skulls and silences in butterfly land, in the hope of getting them down to the dimensions of an hallucination and so presently expelling them from his thought". The importance of the naive croquet player to enhance the effect of the story is evident at such a point. The mind of the reader is prevented from leaping ahead to give particular shape

to these realities, according to his particular temperament and views, by the offhand enquiry: "And what may those more terrible realities be?" The mind is left open, ready for the Wellsian answer. The world is in the grip of an epidemic of irrational fear; the "Frame of the Present" — necessary to provide the human animal with a sense of security and content — has been broken, and its world has become overwhelmingly vast and horrible, open to the horrors of its cave-man past and the Wrath to Come.

It is amazing with what completeness Mr. Wells has gathered up into these hundred pages the full force of all that he has been so long occupied in telling us, issuing warning after warning that our petty civilization is threatened if we cannot adjust ourselves to new and larger responsibilities. And in view of the world situation today it is no wonder that in this fable he should allow his apocalyptic challenge to be answered by the disturbed and distressed croquet player with the characteristic politeness: "I'm sorry, but I can't help it this morning. I have other engagements. . . . I am going to play croquet with my aunt at half past twelve today."

H. J. DAVIS.

Kipling Autobiography

SOMETHING OF MYSELF: Rudyard Kipling; Macmillan; pp. 237; $2.00.

WHEN RUDYARD KIPLING DIED, the tributes to his memory read strangely to anyone who remembered 1921, when Wm. Lyon Phelps could write, "everybody who reads anything reads Kipling." Oddly enough, it seemed to be the Poet of Imperialism that stuck in the minds and sometimes in the gullets of men; the masterly workman in English prose, not inferior to Hardy in his craft, and the only English match for Maupassant, was frequently passed over in a few formal words. He had become slightly old-fashioned, and had not yet won his way to a classic.

Little of his work, indeed, in the last twenty-five years of his life, was worthy of his previous achievement; but in these autobiographic memoirs the full, strong, individual voice that at the end of the last century startled the English-speaking world into amazed admiration, speaks out again as full and strong as it ever did. The accurate sense of his own limitations as a craftsman, which kept him out of novel-writing, preserved him from any attempt at a formal biography. Though the book is roughly chronological, it contracts, expands and omits as fancy dictates. There is not a dull page in it. He concentrates steadily on two main themes; his development as a craftsman, and the education, formal and informal, that set his opinions.

They are not opinions that find a great deal of approval at the moment; but with all their limitations, they are not ignoble. He belonged to a generation of Anglo-Indians that were in many ways a race apart, and in not a few of these ways definitely superior to their successors. His hearty appreciation of his own people and his own civilization went hand in hand with a genuine understanding and respect for much of the older Indian culture. If his prejudices were set, his eyes were open, and a certain elemental realism rebelled against the opponents of Imperialism who at home cheerfully permitted "white girls of sixteen, at twelve or fourteen pounds per annum, to haul thirty and forty pounds weight of bath-water at a time up four flights of stairs." If he had sentimental illusions about the mission of the English in South Africa, he had none about their behaviour, and even the illusions were partly the outgrowth of a realistic valuation of the Boers' native mode of life and their treatment of the black population.

With all its faults, the ideal that he unrepentently reiterates in these pages was at least free from that touch of meanness which has disfigured so much of more recent policy. He was trained in a hard school, and grew to like the very hardness, or at least to approve the temper it produced, a temper that could not be produced in any other way. If he can follow the reviews of this, his last book, he must be particularly delighted to see how, though dead, he can still irritate the sort of people he disliked.

But whatever one's opinion of his theories of statecraft — and much of the criticism directed against it is the result of misquotation and careless reading—no one can fail to thrill to the spare, direct brilliance of such writing as this: "When the fog thinned, I looked out and saw a man standing opposite the pub where the barmaid lived. Of a sudden his breast turned dull red, like a robin's, and he crumpled, having cut his throat. In a few minutes — seconds it seemed — a hand-ambulance arrived and took up the body. A pot-boy with a bucket of steaming water, sluiced the blood off into the gutter, and what little crowd had collected went its way."

L. A. MacKAY.

An Oppressed People

BREAD AND WINE: Ignazio Silone; Reginald Saunders (Harpers); pp. 319; $2.50.

THIS IS A GREAT BOOK, and the finest novel I have read for years. Written in the grand manner of the historical novel (Feuchtwanger's "Jew Suss" is the nearest parallel that comes to mind) it is yet a picture of contemporary rural Italy under Fas-

cism, written by an Italian living in exile in Switzerland. The author's intimate knowledge of the people and the country he describes enables him to attain a completeness of presentation which no historical novel can hope to achieve. It is the story of a socialist underground leader who has returned from abroad because he cannot bear to be away. By making Pietro Spina (whose general background and experiences are obviously very near to his own) the victim of an illness which prevents any very active party work for a long time, Silone achieves a far broader and more contemplative effect. Spina himself, disguised as a priest, has now time to seek to understand these peasants for whom he risks so much and to see them with fully awakened eyes; while when he turns his gaze upon himself we share his doubts and hesitations and the effort to transform a ritualistic church education, which he has hitherto tried to cast out, into a living inspiration to work for the good of mankind. With a skill and sincerity that secure for religious struggles the sympathy of the most irreligious reader, Silone unfolds the slow self-conquest of this individual against a background of peasantry who neither care nor understand, yet sullenly resent the tyranny they openly honour and obey.

The characters are all convincing, arresting and alive, while the author has avoided the mistake of any full characterization of the oppressors. Some reach the sublime, in particular old Don Benedetto, the old priest and scholar, a peaceful man who, at the age of seventy-five, is forced by his own inner Christianity to passive rebellion against both church and state. Bianchina, the little prostitute, and Murica, the informer, are triumphs of clear vision, and there are many others.

A book like this shows the utter futility of debates on the incompatibility of art and propaganda. Since the author's whole outlook is anti-Fascist and the picture of suffering humanity takes its meaning from his love of liberty and mankind, he is clearly a propagandist. But even the Duce himself could not deny that "Bread and Wine" is art without incurring ridicule wherever men can read. That no such art has so far arisen or can, as I believe, arise on the other side, is not the least convincing proof of the ultimate doom of modern tyrannies. No one, whatever his convictions, can fail to be deeply moved by this powerful book; all will follow the dangers and escapes of Pietro Spina with an anxiety both more true and more painful than any thriller could provide. And at the end, as he leaves Spina facing almost certain death in the mountains, the reader will find it hard indeed not to face himself.

G. M. A. GRUBE.

Poet to Premier

LEON BLUM: Richard L. Stokes; Longmans Green (Coward McCann); pp. 276; $3.50.

LEON BLUM is perhaps the most surprising, as well as one of the few likeable, of living statesmen. A scholar, a socialist, and a Jew, he has now been Prime Minister of France for nearly a year, and radicals all over the world must hope that his rule may long continue. The author of this book makes no claim to any intimate knowledge of his subject; he gives us a biography that is frankly external and somewhat distant, not so much the story of the man as a clear, interesting, and very readable account of the chief events of his life, with some enlightening quotations from his published works. Within those limits, and written in a straightforward manner, if without any great literary merit, the book is certainly to be welcomed. It is essential to know the facts of a man's life as the world sees them before attempting to resolve the contradictions of his character.

Blum was born in Paris in 1872 and has lived there all his life. His parents were of fairly prosperous middle class merchants. After a brief glance at his childhood we see him as a member of a young group of poets which included such men as Verlaine and Paul Valery. He then came under the influence of Lucien Herr, socialist and bookman, and wrote a number of articles on social subjects, until he came to play a very active, though secondary part in the fight for the vindication of Dreyfus (the whole Dreyfus case is here reviewed). Over and above the practice of law he became more and more interested in public affairs as a socialist, and his development can, to some extent, be traced in a book of mythical conversations between Goethe and Eckerman published in 1901. The ten years before the war seem to have been more detached from political struggles, his works then consisting of volumes of collected articles of literary and dramatic criticism, a refreshingly unorthodox volume, "Du Mariage' (1907), and his most scholarly piece of work, "Stendhal et le Beylisme".

The outbreak of war and the murder of his friend Jaures, brought him sharply back to politics and he was chief secretary to Marcel Sembat, Minister of Public Works, during the years following, when he became thoroughly familiar with the inner workings of the Socialist Party. It is only after the war, at the age of 47, that he first stood as a parliamentary candidate. He was elected, and has sat in the chamber ever since, except for a brief interruption in 1928. In 1920 the majority of the party joined the Third International, but Bloom and his group have never faltered in their belief that socialism could be achieved without revolution, and seceeded. Worth noting in this connection is the fact that, fifteen years later, Blum's party had 101 members to the communists' 10. (The proportion now stands at 148 to 72, after an election in co-operation). Devoid of all the bombastic qualities usually associated with a successful political career, but utterly trustworthy and trusted, he became the leader of his party in 1924. The next ten years were spent in building up, until the success of 1936. Mr. Stokes ends with an account of the socialist measures already achieved, and rightly emphasizes that not only has the Blum government saved the French parliamentary system from utter discredit, but that it may well be on the way to save Western democracy.

MAX REINERS

Trotsky and Soviets

THE REVOLUTION BETRAYED: Leon Trotsky; Doubleday Doran; pp. 308; $3.00.

MEMBERS OF the communist party react to the mere mention of Trotsky's name as bulls do to a red flag, and Trotskyites behave in a like manner to Stalin and all his works. The controversy has tainted far too many writings about Russia, and the outsider, who is not concerned to deify or to vilify, is left somewhat bewildered. In this book, at least the point of view of the author is clear: certainly there are pretty obvious exaggerations and a tendency to make facts fit theory rather than the reverse, but it deserves critical evalution. Merely to abuse Trotsky as a "paranoiac" (see New Masses, March 23) will only confirm the well founded impression that neither side is gifted with any great respect for truth, or any great scruples in quotation. The recent trials have deepened the bitter controversy, but there is nothing in this book (which was written before last August) to suggest any direct connection between Trotsky and acts of terrorism; these are condemned as worse than useless. The tremendous industrial achievements of Russia are freely recognized and the present Soviet system is repeatedly said still to hold more promise of socialism than any capitalist country, though the author believes that a further revolution from below will be needed to remove the ruling bureaucracy.

The non-communist reader may be entertained by Trotsky's deadly effective way of quoting Marx and Lenin against Stalin; but he will do well to remember that there are always two sides to a war of texts, and also to suspend judgment on the reconstruction of historical events from 1917 to 1927, even though, on their side, Stalinites are continually trying to eliminate Trotsky from the October revolution and its results. Of more immediate interest are the charges brought against the present rulers of the U.S.S.R. The attack on their foreign policy is largely based on the theoretical ground that friendship and entanglements with capitalist governments are dangerous to socialism everywhere and forces the communist parties abroad to support those whom, as revolutionary socialists, they should oppose. There is some truth in this argument, but when it drives Trotsky to oppose the popular front not only in France but even in Spain, it betrays itself into a stultifying dogmatism. Few will follow him there.

Nevertheless, after making every allowance for the author's theoretical prejudice and personal feelings, there remains much that is disturbing, nor do recent reports from Russia do much to diminish our discomfort. Ever more numerous arrests and prosecutions confirm the belief that all legitimate channels of political opposition are closed; and, although the charge of a bureaucratic oligarchy may be premature, the recent reports of cadres of specially graded "leaders" show a tendency in that direction, and help to weaken our trust in the new constitution (which Trotsky, of course, dismisses as a fake). As for other criticisms made in this book, they should be answered by facts and figures, and not by insults which will do nothing to reconcile true friends of Russia to alleged gross inequalities of income, to the new anti-abortion and marriage laws, to the reinstating of "discipline" in schools, to conformity in art and literature, and other retrograde steps.

Soviet-worship should not be encouraged, though a full realization of the many great things done there is all to the good. It is becoming increasingly clear that the public ownership of the means of production and distribution does not ensure, of itself, either liberty or equality or even a high standard of living. It is only the first step to socialism, not socialism itself. Trotsky's book, critically read, will awaken the reader to many questions about Russian and about revolutionary theory to which he will want to find the true answer. Even when the answer is a disappointment, the search for truth will never hurt socialism, nor ultimately, Russia.

G. M. A. GRUBE.

They Shall Not Pass

BEHIND THE SPANISH BARRICADES: John Langdon-Davies; Macmillan (Secker); pp. 303; $3.75.

EVERYBODY WHO HAS NOT already read Mr. Langdon-Davies' book should do so as soon as possible. It is a clear, straightforward and most moving account of events in Spain prior to the July rebellion and thence on to the end of October by a reputable English writer who is a lover of Spain and has known the country and all sections of her people for fifteen years. On a motor bicycle, accompanied at times by his son of 17, he was able to go where he wanted from May until his return to England, unlike other English journalists who have apparently visited Spain by aeroplane for a few brief hours and then gone home to write up atrocity stories for the more repressed and perverted among their readers. The book is illustrated with excellent snapshots taken by the author.

We are first given a picture of the appalling condition of Spain between 1934 and 1936, the legality and liberal program of the government elected in February, 1936, (as legal as Ramsay Macdonald's Labor government at least), the precise political complexion of the CNT, FAI, UGT; the nature of this "Army in Overalls"; and chapters on Barcelona, Madrid, Toledo, and the burning of the churches. Over and over again the author saw men carefully collecting articles to send to the museums from the churches before they were fired; the firing of the churches has been largely a symbolic gesture, a countering of magic by magic. When one hears of the conduct of some of the priests, the political use made of the confessional and that in the Catechism to vote Liberal is described as mortal sin, one can only wonder at the restraint of those who, have apparently done no more than burn the churches and have certainly not committed the atrocities so freely imagined by their opponents. Protestant churches, by the way, have not been touched, nor worshippers molested.

We are told of a co-operative fishing village — a real experiment in communal living — and, on the other side, of a feudal village in the desert where people are without hope; the former Franco and his allies are out to destroy, the latter to preserve.

There are three recurring themes in this book. First, the terrible tragedy of war which not only brings unimaginable physical suffering but moral degradation even to some of the finest spirits, and the awful responsibility for this is clearly on the small clique who, with outside help, brought civil war to Spain. Secondly the gruesome farce of non-intervention which provided all the most up to date implements of modern war to the one side and left the Loyalists armed very largely with museum weapons, the beastly betrayal of democracy and even of Britain's own imperial interests in favor of class interests

by the British National Government. Finally, that heroic cry from behind the countless barricades in defence of liberty and all that an anti-fascist holds dear: No Passaran, They Shall Not Pass This Way.

GWENYTH MACINTOSH.

NO PASSARAN, A Story of the Battle of Madrid: Upton Sinclair; published by author Station A, Pasadena, California; pp. 96; 25c. (Reduction on Quantity).

MR. SINCLAIR has the same intense sympathy for the Spanish Loyalists, and has expressed it in the form of a novel which he publishes in pamphlet form for the purpose of mass circulation. A German American college boy, Rudolph Messer, extremely, but not unbelievably ignorant of social and international affairs, accidentally meets a young Jewish socialist and is gradually drawn away from his own Nazi family in New York into the socialist movement, decides to go and fight in Spain with a few others, first marries a young Italian anarchist, and later proves himself an efficient leader of his little band. His Nazi cousin sails on the same boat with his private plane and is shot down by Rudolph before Madrid. There is some good, clear-cut characterization; a disturbing, though probably true, picture of the ignorance of the average college student in the U.S.A. who studies economics as he would study a "dead" language; and a really alarming account of Nazi organization and training in New York. Then, in fiction form, much the same events as in Spanish Barricades in Madrid. This is, of course, propaganda, but as propaganda it is to be highly commended. It should make an excellent movie.

G. M.

Intelligent Entertainment

THEATRE: W. Somerset Maugham; Doubleday-Doran & Co.; pp. 292; $2.50.

SOMERSET MAUGHAM, more than any other recent novelist, has re-discovered Defoe's trick of candid plausability. Inevitably, one finds oneself reading his books not as fiction, but as if they were biography; and this impression is further enhanced by his habit of borrowing, like Defoe, as much as the law allows from actual people who happen to interest him. No one who knows the English theatre is in the least doubt about the identity of the actors who provide him with his starting point; but I do not doubt that he has been careful to avoid any libellous resemblance, and anyway, seeing what he has made of the book, and the characters, it would be hard to bear him a grudge.

The blurb on the dust-cover contains an unusual amount of bosh. Indeed, it deserves special mention, as probably the most inaccurate and misleading in the last twelve months, and the sentences quoted from Mr. Maugham himself are possibly the silliest part of it. "Theatre" is a brilliant book, an absorbing and continuously entertaining book, but for none of the reasons given on the dust-cover. Let us remove the dust-cover with tongs, and look at the book itself, whose appropriate gold designs on black will fit in so nicely with the earlier volumes on the shelf.

All Mr. Maugham's novels are novels of distinction, whatever other quality they may have or lack; but this one is particularly distinguished by the fact that he has done with apparent ease what has hardly ever been done: he has presented theatrical people in a way that makes them seem not only real but important. Important not as types of stage people, nor as types of humanity, but as individuals. He is not showing you the depths of "a woman's heart", but of this particular woman's heart; and because this particular woman is an actress to the depths of her heart, he has given us a portrait of an actress whom we feel to be an actress, not just a mask of grease-paint over a woman who might as well have been anything else, and whom we feel to be a great actress, though we hardly see her on the stage at all. And again, particularly in the character of the actress and her husband, he works brilliantly his favorite trick of giving his characters solidity by the deliberately bald juxtaposition of superficially inconsistent and unexpected characteristics.

But, again like Defoe, he is primarily interested not in character analysis for its own sake, but in telling a good story. And this is an excellent story, moving through hair-breadth escapes and trials to the relief of a thoroughly satisfactory triumph at the end. The passion, first idle and mocking, then desperate, of a middle-aged and devoted wife for a rather vulgar young man could easily have been ludicrous or sordid, but Mr. Maugham's iron wit in the lighter moments, his intensity of sympathy on graver occasions, have produced in the highest degree what in the preface to "Cosmopolitan" he set before us as the novelist's true aim, "intelligent entertainment".

L. A. MACKAY.

New Fiction

THE STREET OF THE FISHING CAT: Jolan Foldes; Farrar and Rinehart; pp. 308; $2.50.

SPANISH TRAILS: T. de la Rhue; Caxton; pp. 285; $2.50.

CENTRAL STANDARD TIME: Harlan Hatcher; Farrar and Rinehart; pp. 314; $2.50.

MARRIED PEOPLE: Mary Roberts Rinehart; Farrar and Rinehart; pp. 341; $2.25.

THE STREET OF THE FISHING CAT is the winner of the All Nations Prize Novel Competition. According to the publishers its chief merit as an entry in the contest was the international setting of the story and the cosmopolitan character of the protagonists. Joseph Wood Crutch, in his report on it, gives far more cogent reasons for the decision. Nevertheless the publishers supply one explanation of the failure of John McIntyre's Steps Going Down, a far better novel by any contemporary standards, to win the prize. For Steps Going Down, which won a prize in the American division, is confined to a subsection of American society which would be scarcely recognized or understood on any other continent. But this is not meant to imply, by any means, that The Street of The Fishing Cat is not a good novel. The story is colourful and the situations which confront a group of exiles seeking a living on one narrow Parisian street are adroitly handled. The style is expert and charming for which credit must be given to Miss Jacobi, who translated the story from the Hungarian, as well as to the author. But the deft juxtaposition of the idyllic and the sordid, of pathos and humour, is a little too pat for anything but romance; and nowadays one expects something more than romance from a worldwide novel competition.

If all history were to be administered in such skilful doses as in Spanish Trails there would be little fiction read. This account of the settling of New Spain — Mexico and the American Southwest — by the Spaniards who fled the political and spiritual rigours of Philip's Inquisition, is thoroughly engrossing. It provides, too, an

analysis of the Spanish character which, I believe, holds good today as it did them. These people Mr. de la Rhue describes had a fierce and relentless individualism which would not let them stay at rest wherever their liberties were curtailed, but which drove them to seek greener pastures and inspired them to surmount, even ignore, the most strenuous obstacles. From Tampico in Mexico, they battled and starved and fought their way north to the Sierra Nevada range and the California coast. And as the author frequently points out, these men of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were not after gold, but seeking freedom. They were idealists into whose calculations gain, except in the essentials of livelihood, entered not at all. In their wake is left a saga of heroism which is the basis of all folklore in that section of the country. Mr. de la Rhue treats his material with respect; "for," as he writes, "wise, indeed, is he who really knows where legend quits and history begins."

Central Standard Time is an undistinguished novel written in an experimental manner. Mr. Hatcher has borrowed from a number of his American colleagues in formulating his style, but a lack of coherence is all that he seems to manage. Unless I am old-fashioned, his syntax is decidedly faulty. Also, his punctuation is entirely divorced from the rules laid down by the grammar textbooks. The book is a cross-section of life in a mid-western American town. The parallels Mr. Hatcher draws are authentic, but pretty obvious, just the same. His criticisms of society show that his heart is in the right place, which is about the best that can be said for his book.

Mary Roberts Rinehart's new book, a collection of short stories, should satisfy her admirers. "Married People" has all the ingredients which assured the success of her other works. And these ingredients must not be under-estimated, for Mrs. Rinehart, within the narrow canvas she allows herself, does a very good job. Her light touch, her unfailing sympathy in handling minor tragedy, her intuitive knowledge of the behaviour of well-to-do married couples, are the very excellent equipment which she devotes to her strictly commercial products. One Mary Roberts Rinehart is worth a hundred Kathleen Norrises, anyway.

ELEANOR GODFREY.

JUAN IN CHINA: Eric Linklater; Jonathan Cape; pp. 383; $2.00.

IT IS NATURAL to compare this book with Juan in America. There has not been much change in Juan himself, for he is still involved in a succession of fantastic adventures; possibly the latest are less improbable than the early ones. The humor is of a slightly different quality; less boisterous and more ironic. I laughed aloud only once in reading this book, whereas my recollection of reading Juan in America is of a series of guffaws.

Juan's adventures in China are in Shanghai at the time of the Japanese destruction of Chapei. In the course of his bubbling narrative, the author gives a reasonably good picture of the geographical and political position of the International Settlement, the Chinese City and Chapei. There can be few good books so frivolous which give so extensive a survey of an unusual place at so unusual a time. In spite of the corruption and ineptitude of the Chinese the sympathy of the reader is turned completely in their favor.

There are some excellent characters, all vividly drawn and as cosmopolitan as Shanghai itself. My only complaint is that the paper-chase episode is not rounded off: the Fanney-Browns were not people who would lend a pony to a man, hoping to sell it, and allow him to discard it miles away, without compensation or explanation.

It is a book very well worth reading.

C. A. ASHLEY.

CARDS ON THE TABLE: Agatha Christie; Dodd Mead & Co.; pp. 262; $2.25.

A NEW AGATHA CHRISTIE mystery is bound to be greeted with delight by detective-story devotees. They will not be disappointed, for this is one of the authoress' best. The situation is entertaining and intriguing from the start, and we are kept guessing till the end (at any rate I was). The murderer must be one of four, each of which is known to have murdered before, and there are no clues of any sort. Hard by were a Scotland Yard inspector, a Secret Service man, a female writer of mysteries (a most amusing person) and, inevitably, Hercule Poirot. Psychological solutions are the little Belgian's forte and he is here thoroughly in his element. It may be fanciful to suppose that Mrs. Christie has been reading Dorothy Sayers but the characters seem rather more carefully drawn than in some earlier works, though not to the extent of slowing down the pace. Poirot's accent has also improved, which I confess to be a relief. He still has his mannerisms, but they are not irritating, and one is ready to grant him a further lease of life. More cannot be said without giving away the plot, but rest assured that all the awkward people die before the end and, with a happy marriage on the horizon and a thoroughly self-satisfied lecture from Hercule, everybody who still lives goes away happy.

G. M. A. GRUBE.

Eminently a Victorian

THE UNEXPECTED YEARS: Laurence Housman; Cape-Nelson; pp. 392; $3.00.

"GO TO IT, OLD GIRL! You done it well! You done it well!" It was this cry from a group of men at the curb on the way home in the Jubilee Procession, and Victoria's delighted bobs and smiles in reply to it that led Mr. Housman to become her dramatic biographer; and New York has lately seen him earn well his right to term himself "eminently a Victorian" in the series of plays he calls "Victoria Regina". Like her, he too claims to have been fully a part of the life of his generation, and shows in his quiet way how much more exciting and varied were the activities of the later Victorians than their fathers. We see Mr. Housman pass from associating with Gordon Craig in producing the remnants of a play to the lowly rear of the militant suffragette's parade where the few brave male adherents walked. And later on, in 1914, he was brave enough to try to hold them to their views against war. He stuck to the principles they forsook. Now he is once more in the front of the peace movement; he is one of the few real pacifists who do not talk of peace and think war. Instead of hiding behind defences and multiplying them, he would come out in the open to discuss grievances, reasoning that the so-called aggressor nations have been driven to become so in part by such grievances being persistently ignored.

As a book, the first chapters are the best, given shape by a warm recollection of early years in the garden, and a group of brilliant children who brought themselves

up largely apart from their elders. It is a pleasant description which naturally gains a good deal from the towering shadow of greatness of the elder brother who led in all the writing and inventive games. It is interesting in the curious disparity in taste between these two writing brothers, constantly showing itself in different ways and prompting some of A. E. Housman's witticisms, such as this postscript to a letter written shortly after the publication of the Shropshire Lad: "I was just licking the envelope when the following envenomed remark occurred to me: I had far, far rather have my poems mistaken as yours, than your poems mistaken as mine." Laurence Housman will doubtless always remain overshadowed by his brother, but in his unassuming modesty and quiet humour he disarms our criticism and roused our sympathies for his attitude in the many conflicts of his more active career, which came upon him unexpected and undesired. His continued and preposterous encounters with the Censor are incredibly Gilbertian, leading up to a Constitutional Crisis, when the late King Edward VIII told the Lord Chamberlain to license "Victoria Regina". The King, for being "up-to-date and sensible", must abdicate, but "Victoria Regina" will be played in London this summer.

GLADYS DAVIS.

Indian Journey

LANCER AT LARGE: by Francis Yeats-Brown; Macmillan; pp. 323; $3.00.

THIS LATEST BOOK by Major Yeats-Brown invites comparison with his "Lives of a Bengal Lancer," which, some seven years ago, charmed the reading public. It may be said at once that the second book is not in the same class with the first.

It is an account of a rapid journey through the length of India (to be exact, from Peshawar to Cape Comorin, and back) and judged as such, is a good one. Its style is vivid and its treatment of the people and their customs sympathetic. It devotes much attention to the "mystic" aspect of Indian life and will, therefore, interest many who have a hankering after the occult.

It is, however, lacking in accuracy and in soundness of opinion. Dealing with what the author calls Indian India he gives his impressions of the large native states, Mysore and Hyderabad. In Mysore he instances as an example of village reforms the erection of imposing gateposts at the entrance to each village. He, of course, did not visit the interior of these villages nor did he realize, as he might well have done, that the pillars are confined to villages on the main roads and are for the benefit not of the villagers but of people like Major Yeats-Brown who pass by. They have, in most cases, been forced on the villagers, and have been built and are being maintained out of the ridiculously scanty village funds to the detriment of real village improvement.

In his section on Hyderabad, he devotes considerable space to the Osmania University where instruction is given through the medium of Urdu. This institution was founded through the efforts of that astute Indian, Sir Akbar Hydari, and the author quotes with approval Sir Akbar's dictum that "the time of mental energy, the double strain upon young minds entailed by the process of instruction in a foreign language (English) is enormous and irreparable". A little enquiry would have revealed the fact that over eighty per cent. of the population of Hyderabad State are Hindus whose language is either Telugu, Canarese or Mahratti, and to whom Urdu is about as foreign as English.

When we, therefore, read the following statements of the author, we may doubt the soundness of his views. "Soldiers are more interesting than other Europeans in the East; they see more of life than civil servants and business men, if not leashed by poverty; and they think more for themselves. Also, they understand more of India and become less orientalized by it."

This book can be recommended to those who wish to get something of the atmosphere of India. Its discussions of the country and its problems cannot be taken seriously.

L. C. COLEMAN.

Class Skirmish

AMERICAN CITY: Charles Rumford Walker; Farrar & Rinehart; pp. 314; $2.50.

MR. WALKER subtitles his study of modern Minneapolis "A Rank and File History," and in that phrase he sums up the nature of his approach in this absorbing and even exciting book. It is, as he says in his preface, the biography of an American city; but it is still more the anatomy of a society in which the forces of transmutation and regeneration are coming to grips with the forces of decay.

Minneapolis is one of the achievements of modern Western capitalism. It was built on the exploitation of the natural resources of a virgin territory; and that process involved also the exploitation of the human material by whose hands the wealth of the region was created. The rank and file who flocked to the northwest as to a land of promise found themselves in the grip of an economic oligarchy of the type that was characteristic of America in the generation after the Civil War. Ever since the seventies there have been periodic and bitter but ineffectual revolts in an attempt to shake off that grip by political or economic action. Without the decline of the factors upon which the economic empire was built, the fight to share its dwindling resources has become all the more desperate. It has not yet reached the stage of a definite class war; but it has already produced a major skirmish of the first significance.

That skirmish — the truck drivers' strike of 1934 — forms the bulk of Mr. Walker's story. Though he admits that there are many respects in which Minneapolis is by no means typical of American cities, the main features of that struggle are typical of labor conflict in America. It is true that the organizing ability behind the strike was of an unusual quality. It is true also that the attitude of Governor Olson was in many ways unique. But in spite of his restraining influence the familiar combination of the employers and the authorities, united in a determination to crush by violence the efforts of the rank and file to achieve a living wage, repeats the pattern so familiar in the story of labor on this continent. The way in which the struggle was brought to a successful issue, small though the gains may have been, provides a narrative of the most vivid interest.

Mr. Walker handles his theme admirably. He has a clear and fundamental philosophy based on the class

struggle which allows him to see the real issues and to judge events with clarity and understanding. He has also a sympathetic perception which enables him to appreciate the points of view of the various protagonists even when they are completely alien to his own, and prevents his sympathy with the rank and file from blinding him to the weaknesses within the movement. The Minneapolis strike was only one of many symptoms of recent social unrest; but it has a significance peculiarly its own, and few books of this type are more stimulating reading than the volume under review.

EDGAR McINNIS.

International Affairs

THE LEAGUE AND THE FUTURE OF THE COLLECTIVE SYSTEM: Lectures Geneva Inst. International Affairs, August, 1936; Nelson (Allen Unwin); pp. 254; $2.50.

CLAMOUR FOR COLONIES: H. S. Ashton; Nelson (Butterworth); pp. 192; $2.50.

"THE LEAGUE and the Future of the Collective System" is a useful, unofficial supplement to the official League publication recording and analyzing the communications received from governments during the summer of 1936 on the subject of the application of the principles of the League covenant. Both publications give a vivid idea of the differences of opinion which exist on this matter among governments, experts, and men of affairs. The book contains orthodox statements on the League policy of the British Labour party, and of the governments of Czechoslovakia, Germany, the U.S.S.R., and the U.S.A. Two of the more interesting of the other lectures are by Mr. E. J. Phelan of the I.L.O., who is more brutally frank than others about the failure of the League, and Mr. Clarence Streit, of the "New York Times", who deflates, one after another, the current proposals to "patch" the League. A weakness in the book is the absence of any discussion of the future of the League by a representative of the European states which were neutral in the last war. Their approach to the problem of immediate national policy towards the League would be found to coincide in large measure with that of Mr. Mackenzie King.

"Clamour for Colonies" is an attempt to put in popular form the British Tory argument against any transfer of colonies and mandates to Germany, Italy, and Japan. Mr. Ashton's statement of this argument is confused and contradictory and worth reading only as a study of the mental processes of a British Tory. The value of the book may be judged by the statement (p. 173) that the frontiers under the post-war treaties "were drawn, whether in Europe, Africa or Asia, for good or ill, to stand for all time."

ESCOTT REID.

Nerves

AUTO-CORRECTIVISM; The Psychology of Nervousness: V. E. Fisher, ; Copp Clark (Caxton Printers); pp. 337; $3.50.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK, broadly stated, is to present the intelligent layman and the specialist with a more simple interpretation of the psychoneuroses and allied personality disorders than has hitherto been offered. The interpretation grows out of the author's acquaintance with the field of abnormal psychology, through years of careful study and an extensive clinical experience. It is boldly presented, and generously illustrated with stories of case material.

According to the author, human motives may be classified under three major headings: (a) Somato-motives, which subserve the individual's physical well-being, (hunger, thirst, etc); (b) Selfless or Racial Motives, which subserve propagation and its ends, (sexual desire, parental tendency, etc); (c) Selfish or Ego-motives, which subserve selfish ends, (self-assertiveness, curiosity, etc.). Whenever imbalance between the selfish and the selfless motives is set up there is need for correction. Hence, the human organism has been endowed with a further mechanism, a mysterious supervisor of the relative degrees to which activities spring from these two great dynamic energy streams. Herein, of course, lies the significance of the term "Auto-correctivism". By this process balance is restored.

Into that picture, the psychoneuroses fit, in that the neurotic symptoms are auto-corrective devices, indicating the existence of imbalance in the personality. Invariably these symptoms are such that they reflect an over-development of "selfish" tendencies, which express themselves in ways that are often bizarre. Similarly, the author, on the basis of his general formulation, depicts typical forms of imbalance at different stages of development. In early childhood, for example, we frequently observe the over-development of "selfless" tendencies at the expense of the "selfish"; in adolescence, an over-development of the "selfish" tendencies may occur, and here the imbalance demands auto-correctivism which often assumes neurotic form. In general the auto-corrective mechanism may be characterized as a means whereby the individual avoids the more acute forms of mental abnormalities.

Commenting on Dr. Fisher's point of view, there is nothing particularly new in the notion of subjective motives; nor is the classification of motives given by the author unusual, except perhaps in the special emphasis on race-preservation tendencies as "selfless" in contrast with the ego motives as "selfish". An auto-corrective mechanism of some sort is a necessary postulate if we accept such notions as conflicting sets of motives, the general independence of these in development, and the resultant imbalance (in some instances) when the organism is viewed as a whole. But the nature of this auto-correctivism is not very clear, nor does it point to any special therapeutic or preventive procedure beyond the realm of common sense — which is probably the soundest attribute of the book, especially as it is written, at least in part, for lay consumption.

In the latter part of the book preventive matters are discussed and a diagnosis of world neurosis is attempted. Here the common sense view of the author is ably and convincingly expressed. It probably could have been equally well written without the auto-corrective viewpoint.

The book is well worth reading. It will doubtless be received as a challenging outcome of a wide clinical experience, written in an extremely able and scintillating way.

J. D. M. GRIFFIN

W. LINE

Legal Ghosts

FOR LAWYERS AND OTHERS; Theobald Mathew; Saunders (Hodges); pp. 293; $3.00.

A NUMBER OF PAPERS, some of them previously printed in periodicals, have been collected in this volume. They deal largely with the practice of law before the Judicature Acts of 1873 with 1875. The author states that his papers are the result of researches made during those periods of enforced leisure which members of his profession enjoy. He has not written flippantly but his learning is not ponderous. Nor is it mere antiquarianism. His studies should interest most lawyers and certain of them ought to have a wider appeal.

Even those who have not read Dickens since childhood, will remember his critical interest in the law and its practitioners. The author shows the accuracy and completeness of Dickens' knowledge of legal practice as illustrated in "Bardell v. Pickwick". Why did the trial take place at the Guildhall and not in the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster? Why did Mr. Justice Starleigh address Sergeant Buzfuz as "Brother Buzfus"? Where did Dickens get his model for the opening speech of Sergeant Buzfuz? Questions such as these are answered in a very entertaining manner. It is interesting to know that no less a person than Lord Melbourne, then Prime Minister, was defendant in a cause celebre very similar to Mr. Pickwick's, and that his indiscretions were very Pickwickian in character. One of the legal abuses, which Dickens missed, has not escaped the author: The Palace Court at Westminster, abolished in 1848.

There is also a very interesting chapter on the Sergeants, their privileges and their losing fight to retain them. There are a number of accounts of famous trials. These are well chosen and the stories well told. The chapter on "Legal Ghosts" gives an amusing picture of certain odd characters who were in active practise towards the end of the nineteenth century. The humour has a legal flavour but the stories told have the virtue of being new to this reviewer.

W. JUDSON.

The Philosophy of Marxism

FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS OF MARXISM: G. Plekhanov; Francis White; Toronto; pp. 145; $1.50.

IN SPITE OF the ignominious role which Plekhanov played in the revolution in his later years, he is still considered one of the foremost Marxist "ideologists". This little book shows wide erudition, and the capacity to come to grips with fundamental problems without preliminary nonsense. This will hardly endear it to the average reader. Yet thoughtful socialists will do well to become acquainted with it. It sheds light on the philosophical background of Marxian socialism.

An essay on "Dialectic and Logic", which appears as an appendix, should be read first. It is one of the best presentations of the meaning of dialectic. Plekhanov contrasts the logic of dialectic with the logic of identity, and shows, I think conclusively, that a genetic account of existence (or an account of the genetic features of existence) must be dialectical. For the benefit of those who have been led to believe that dialectic is some kind of sectarian philosophical hocus-pocus, I should like to add: Like M. Jourdain's prose, dialectic is the unacknowledged possession of Everyman. It is used not only by many philosophers who chose to leave out the label (i.e., Bergson, Dewey, Whitehead), but also by the "man in the street", whenever he feels it necessary to answer a question by both a Yes and a No at the same time ("Is the depression over? — Yes and No." "Is Roosevelt a capitalist? — Yes and No." "Is there a non-intervention agreement about Spain? — Yes and No.")

The next topic of importance is the meaning of "materialism" and the "materialistic interpretation of history". This forms the bulk of the book. Materialism holds that "thought is determined by being, not being by thought". Material existence antecedes the emergence of thought. Once on the scene, thought is still a "reflection" of material existence. It is always the thought of a material, existential being, not of a disembodied mind. Consequently, if we are to understand the thought, we must study the existential conditions under which it emerged. To understand the thought we must understand the thinker and his world. Hence the doctrine of economic determinism: In the long run men's acts are a more dependable index to their will, then their conscious motives or professed intentions. To understand their thoughts we must look at their deeds. To basic realm of action is man's adaptation to the physical environment to satisfy his wants—the economic realm. Yet, as Plekhanov points out, a "mechanical" interpretation of this truth will lead to certain error. It must be used dialectically.

This account of dialectical materialism is sadly watered down. For more solid doses turn to the book.

GREGORY VLASTOS.

This and That

BUSINESS CYCLES AND FORECASTING: Elmer C. Bratt; Business Publications, Chicago; pp. 301; $3.50.

THIS IS A TEXT BOOK for college courses on the business cycle. The objectives set out, which include, among others, explanation of business "changes", and a statement of "the extent to which economic change can be prevented by afterthought", are definitely not achieved. The only case where a virtue can be made of the book's covering a great deal of ground superficially is in the exposition of the types of statistical series available and the digest of methods currently employed in dealing with them. A good deal of propaganda is passed off on the student in lieu of analysis whenever the author has occasion to deal with anything except description of statistical methods. Thus: "the business cycle amounts to correction by survival of the fittest. It is the best method we know for correcting unsound economic positions". (p. 314).

V. F. COE.

LANDLORD AND PEASANT IN CHINA: Chen Han-seng; Francis White (International) pp. 114; $2.00.

A STUDY OF THE AGRARIAN CRISIS in Kwangtung, the province of which Canton is the capital. The peasants have been squeezed by the military (dependent on foreign arms), by clan officials, and by the government, until the land is largely in the hands of absentee landlords, and two-thirds of the peasants are in debt. Many of them have enlisted in the army, and in many areas twenty per cent. have emigrated.

Interest payments and taxes are often met by the sale of children for semi-slavery in domestic work or prostitution. Some of the peasants pawn their children only to find that redemption is impossible and that they

have, in fact, merely sold them at a low price. The misery has been accentuated by a heavy fall in remittances from Chinese abroad, which were previously enormous.

The tables in the appendix are not well arranged, and although the English is excellent for a foreigner, a revision by someone to whom English is native would have been beneficial. The material collected will doubtless be very useful to other investigators; to the rest of us it gives a picture so shocking as to be almost incredible.

C. A. ASHLEY.

DICTATORS: Jacques Bainville; Cape-Nelson; pp. 268; $3.00.

THE author sets out to give us an account of the dictators of history. Except for South America, however, he only deals with Europe, from Solon to Hitler. Even so, his scope is uncertain: Pericles in there, yet there is nothing on Augustus, and not a word of Pilsudski. Too much attention is given to the method of getting power, not enough to lasting achievements or to other than purely political factors. There are a number of highly questionable assertions about the past, and the present is somewhat out of focus: Mussolini is painted to great advantage, Lenin and Stalin are caricatured. The treatment of Hitler is more balanced.

While the book is not without interest to those who can, from their own knowledge, keep a check on the at times surprising assertions, it cannot be recommended to a reader innocent of history. The author, consciously or not, comes to look on dictatorship as an at times necessary evil to keep the Reds in check; hence no doubt the greatness of Mussolini. The best sections are those on France: Richelieu, Louis XIV, Robespierre and the two Napoleons; and also that on Mustapha Kemal.

G.M.A.G.

THE CONSCIENCE OF THE RICH CONFRONTED BY THE WORLD CRISIS: Henri Lasserre; Fellowship for a Christian Social Order; pp. 30; 15c.

THIS LITTLE PAMPHLET is one of the few which really deserve the much misused word "challenging". It is addressed more particularly to members of the Oxford Group, but it is, as the author says, equally applicable to all those "of the middle class — whatever their church or political associations may be — who feel somewhat disturbed by the evident maldistribution of wealth". Indeed, I should go farther than this. It is for all middle class people whose minds are not completely closed. Anyone who is not disturbed by the maldistribution of wealth before he reads this pamphlet is pretty certain to be after he finishes it. It is very kind, very gentle, very persuasive; but absolutely relentless in its logic and its ethics.

Professor Lasserre starts from what he believes to be the fact that "the wealthy, those with an unearned income or an abnormally high salary, those in general belonging to the owning class, are beginning to become aware, very confusedly and yet very intensely, that their lives are motivated by principles which they have come to question. Without being able to arrive at any clear view about the matter, they realize that the very foundation of their economic life is not only seriously shaken, but is utterly unjustifiable morally". He goes on "What is the offence that we" (note the pronoun) "—as individuals of the propertied class — commit against our fellowmen, under the cover of the imperfect laws which we made for ourselves? What are the wrong-doings because of which, without our realizing clearly why, our consciences are harassed? This offence is, we believe, the very fact of possessing wealth — any form of wealth bearing, or expected to bear, an unearned income. This includes the possession of any kind of securities or claims or deeds whereby we have the power of diverting, directly or indirectly, into our own pockets, and without any fair compensation in services on our part, a portion of the product of the labour of other men, in the form of interest, dividends, rents, bonuses, or other benefits".

Uncomprising enough! And that is a typical passage. Professor Lasserre insists that private ownership in the means of production "violates the right of property . . . It enables the owner of productive means to deprive the worker of his property in the shape of a part of the product of his labour . . . " It also deprives the worker of "that free and permanent access to the means of production which is inseparable from his right to work and earn property for himself, and which is therefore an essential condition of his right of property". Social property should be socially owned, and social property now privately owned should be restored to the community: that is the burden of the argument. It is driven home in such clear and simple language as to convince, I think, all but the "invincibly ignorant". It is the ideal prescription for those suffering from individualistic pseudo-religion.

EUGENE FORSEY.

SOVIET COMMUNISM, Dictatorship or Democracy? Sidney and Beatrice Webb; Francis White; pp. 32; 10c.

IN THIS SHORT PAMPHLET, based on parts of their book, Soviet Communism, the Webbs discuss specifically whether the present government of Russia can be called a dictatorship, and after briefly reviewing the different organs of government they decide that, formally at least, it cannot. There are some interesting remarks on the power of the communist party, which stand outside the constitution, and of Stalin, its general secretary. The hero worship which was developed and encouraged by those around him rather than by himself, gives a very special kind of power which cannot be defined. The pamphlet is an interesting introduction to the author's vast book on Russia.

AT THE MOSCOW TRIALS: D. N. Pritt, K.C., M.P.; Francis White; pp. 31; 5c.

IN THIS DEFENCE of the Soviet government's handling of the Zinoviev trial last August Mr. Pritt (who was present) is pleading a case rather than making a judicial examination of the evidence; he ignores and ridicules, rather than refutes, objections made by the other side. The two important points he does bring out, however, are first, that he, a trained lawyer of considerable repute, is convinced that the confessions at the trial were quite voluntary; in the second place, that it was natural for the prisoners to confess only when the evidence against them had become overwhelming. The Russian legal system gives the defendant full opportunity to acquaint himself with the evidence held against him. Neither point should be ignored.

THE PEOPLE'S FRONT, The New Betrayal; James Burnham; Pioneer Publishers; pp. 64; 15c.

WRITING AS A TROTSKYIST, Burnham admits in theory the difference between a People's Front, based on a common program, and a United Front for joint action on specific measures. He approves of the latter, but gives no example of it in practice. He says the United Front should have been adopted in Germany, but he condemns the present governments both in France and Spain; I fail to see the difference. In fact, his sections on the two people's front governments are both prejudiced and patently unfair. Nevertheless, the pamphlet is useful in that it shows certain dangers of an indiscriminate united front policy: (1) if pursued prematurely, the policy does involve the risk of giving up real socialist action and propaganda for the sake of a shadowy and unstable unity; (2) popular front governments or parties are nearly always too conservative, not too radical; (3) any support given to a military program tends to develop fascistic tendencies in our own countries. A popular front is clearly necessary at a certain moment of crisis; but it is essentially a tactical and temporary alliance. Burnham condemns it everywhere, the communists now recommend it everywhere. Both are mistaken.

G.M.A.G.

BOOKS RECEIVED

THE MUSE IN CHAINS: Stephen Potter; Nelson (Cape); pp. 287; $2.50.

OUR RUDE FOREFATHERS: Louie M. Miner; The Torch Press; pp. 274; $3.00.

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON: John Milton Baker; Nelson (Allen Unwin); pp. 256; $2.50.

METROPOLITAN MAN: Robert Sinclair; Nelson (Allen Unwin); pp. 365; $3.00.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF GERALDUS CAMBRENSIS: Edited and Translated by H. E. Butler; Nelson (Cape); pp. 368; $4.50.

ENGLISH MONKS AND THE SUPPRESSION OF MONASTERIES: Geoffrey Baskerville; Nelson (Cape); pp. 312; $4.50.

MAN TRACKS, with The Mounted Police in Australian Wilds: Ion L. Idriess; Nelson (Cape); pp. 320; $2.50.

THE LAURELS ARE CUT DOWN: Archie Binns; McLelland & Stewart (Reynal and Hitchcock); pp. 332; $2.25.

SALAVIN: Georges Duhamel; Dent; pp. 437; $2.50.

SMOKY CRUSADE: R. M. Fox; Longmans Green; pp. 368; $3.50.

PEACE IS WHERE THE TEMPESTS BLOW: Valentine Kataev; Farrar Rinehart; pp. 341; $2.50.

BUCKSKIN BREECHES: Phil Stong; Farrar Rinehart; pp. 366; $2.50.

THE HAPPY RETURN: C. S. Forester; Saunders (Joseph); pp. 287; $2.00.

WE AREN'T SO DUMB: Christopher Hollis; Longmans Green; pp. 191; $2.00.

FIRST COMMANDMENT: Martin Niemoller; Saunders (Hodge); pp. 276; $2.00.

A HEADMASTER REFLECTS: Guy Kendall; Saunders (Hodge); pp. 288; $2.50.

DIALECTICS: T. A. Jackson; Francis White; pp. 648; $2.50.

WHAT IS LENINISM? pp. 124; 50c. THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION: pp. 155; 60c. STRATEGY AND TACTICS: pp. 96; 50c. DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT: pp. 122; 50c; Francis White.

IN DEFENSE OF THE SOVIET UNION: Leon Trotsky; Pioneer; pp. 40; 10c.

THE NEW SOVIET CONSTITUTION: Anna Louise Strong; Oxford (Holt); pp. 169; $1.50.

THIS IS OUR DAY: Edward Newhouse; McLeod (Furman); pp. 313; $2.50.

OF LUNAR KINGDOMS: Henry Lovejoy Wilson; Copp-Clarke (Caxton); pp. 120; $2.00.

SOVEREIGN PROGRESSION: Lady Sybil Laurence; Saunders (Hodge); pp. 392; $3.00.

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

H. N. Brailsford is the author of Property or Peace, and many other socialist books and articles. His recent article in the New Republic on the British monarchy, caused that journal to be banned by the University of Toronto library.

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Correspondence

To The Editor,
The Canadian Forum.

Dear Sir:

My article, "The Popular Front," was intended to correct the attitude of certain recent contributors to the Forum on the issue of the united front. It was not intended to consider all the complication of this issue, nor the peculiar factors in Canada. A full consideration of the question raised by Mr. Max Reiners in his letter to the Forum in March would require an additional article, which I, as an absentee from Canada, am not in a position to write.

It may well be that, at a given time in a given country, there is no possibility of a united front: the difference in the viewpoints of liberal, socialists, and communists may be too great. As long as socialists and liberals remain pacifist, in domestic and foreign policy, there will be an insuperable barrier in the way of a united or popular front of the kind analyzed in my article. I said in my article that the first condition of the formation of a united front is "a changed attitude on the part of the socialists", a revision of their political thought in the direction of Marxism. It may be added, in answer to Mr. Reiners' question, that a condition of the formation of a people's front is a changed attitude on the part of the liberals. These conditions will be created only in the crucible of political struggle; there is no royal road to the solution of Mr. Reiners' difficulties as regard liberals and pacifists. Especially on the question of peace policy, there is a hard task ahead, in Canada — the hammering out of a common foreign policy. But until all the conditions for stable political alliance are created, there is a fertile field for co-operation on particular issues, in the economic and political sphere; it is this common activity which will ultimately facilitate close alliance.

During this period of ideological change, "boring from within" will not be decisive. If there is an economic and political basis for unity, it is likely that socialist and progressive minds will become more and more receptive to the idea of unity. "Boring" will not hasten its fruitification, any more than a "heresy hunt" can delay it.

On the question of Trotskyism, I agree that there is no common ground between socialists and disciples of Trotsky. My incorrect interpretation of Trotskyism is partly to be explained in the fact that my article was written before the latest trials and before the recent action of Trotskyites in Spain and other countries.

H. G. SKILLING.

The Editor, Canadian Forum:

Sir—I have read with a great deal of interest the article on the "Moscow Trial" by Mr. Grube in your last issue.

However there are some misconceptions revealed there concerning the nature and purpose of the Trotskyist Opposition which should be cleared up.

The Left Opposition was formed in the struggle against the reactionary Stalinist policy of "Socialism in one country" against the Marxist program of the international socialist revolution. The Opposition also waged a resolute fight against the suppression of internal party democracy by the Stalin faction. It opposed the growth of bureaucracy in the party regime wherein all discussion was banned by the apparatus which stifled all internal life in the Bolshevik Party.

By glibly lumping Stalinism and Trotskyism as two warring factions of the Communist movement which are to be equally damned, the author conveys the idea of a personal fight for power between Trotsky and Stalin and that the one is as bad as the other. Let us therefore compare the actions of the early years of the Soviet regime under Lenin and Trotsky with those of the present Stalin regime.

In 1922 Dora Kaplan, a member of the Left Social Revolutionaries, a Russian political party, shot Lenin at a meeting in Moscow. This was part of an admitted conspiracy to remove the existing Soviet leadership by force. Here was real terrorism. The shot fired at Lenin was not as mythical as the famous Hotel Bristol in the Zinoviev Trial. The bullet was actually removed by surgeons and was found to be very real indeed. At the ensuing trial of the guilty persons there were present representatives of the Socialist International who were invited to attend the sessions by the Soviet Government. Among these were Emile Vandervelde of Belgium, Kurt Rosenfeld of Germany, and others. Today the Stalin regime refuses to listen to the idea of an impartial labor commission to investigate the charges against Trotsky although the latter has expressed his desire to attend such a commission. Here is an instance showing the vast gulf of difference between the Lenin-Trotsky regime in the early years of the Russian Revolution and the reactionary nature of the present ruling group.

A second example of this vast difference occurred during the negotiations for the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the German imperialists in 1918. A faction led by Bukharin, Radek, Piatakov, Smirnov, Bubnov and other leading personalities formed inside the Russian Communist Party, fighting this treaty and considering it a betrayal of the revolution. Did Lenin jail these rebels who even published a paper which attacked Lenin as a traitor? Were they shot for "counter-revolution" as they most certainly would be today by the Stalin Government? Remember, this was in the darkest days of civil war when Russia was fighting a hostile world. Yet Lenin did not crush this group by force and in a year it dissolved of its own accord.

These isolated incidents alone suffice to show the difference in the spirit of the two regimes. I am sure the author will agree when he examines the facts and the history of the October Revolution.

Fraternally,
IRVING ABRAMOWITZ.

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